

THE
TRIUMPH
OF
BENEVOLENCE;

OR, THE
HISTORY
OF
FRANCIS WILLS.

BY
THE AUTHOR
OF THE
VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.

VOL. I.

BERLIN:

Sold by AUGUST MYLIUS.

1786.

Bayer. Staats-
Bibliothek
München

THE TRIUMPH
OF
BENEVOLENCE.

CHAPTER I.

In which the reader, according to Arthur Murphy Esquire's opinion, delivered in the first number of his Gray's Inn Journal, will be much embarrassed, and suffer greatly from his natural diffidence, upon being introduced to some persons to whom he is, as yet, an entire stranger: but if he is well bred, and accustomed to see company, this remark will be deemed absurd.

IT was about the latter end of the month of August, and about eight o'clock in the evening, before the day was entirely closed, when three travellers arrived, on foot, at an obscure inn on the great northern road, about nineteen miles from London.

don. They seemed to stand in need of some refreshment, for they were thoroughly wetted with the rain which then poured down incessantly, and had continued to do so all the afternoon. The landlady, a compassionate woman and a widow, pitied their distress, and assisted in relieving it. More logs were added to the fire; and, as their habiliments bespoke them somewhat superior to her common run of customers, she attended them with a double share of diligence. Their cloaths were hung to dry, and the good woman set about preparing some hot for them with great alacrity. But lest my reader should be unacquainted with the beverage they were to partake of, it is necessary to inform him, that it is composed of ale made hot, with an egg beaten up in it, to which a certain quantity of brandy and sugar is added. This was the most comfortable regale the house could afford, and esteemed the most eligible in their present situation. This potation restored warmth to their frigid limbs, and spirits to their bodies, almost exhausted with fatigue. Their cloaths began to dry, and they assumed their former gaiety. The outer room of this inn, though we know not how to distinguish it, yet
are

are conscious it had a sign which time has buried in oblivion, was filled with harvest labourers, whom the severity of the tempest had driven from the field, and who were enjoying, in the interval of labour, all the merriment that society could partake or impart. Loud bursts of laughter shook the room, and songs, universally chorussed, dispelled the gloom that would have otherwise surrounded them from their reflections on the badness of the weather: and, in this exercise, they were assisted by some potent home-brewed, that banished all consideration in proportion to the quantity imbibed.

Into the *penetralia*, or more inward recesses of this hospitable mansion, and by far the most comfortable, viz. the kitchen, two boys, labourers at a neighbouring brick-kiln, were admitted: for their fire was extinguished by the rain, and they were glad to fly for shelter and refreshment to the smaller, but more kindly, hearth of our landlady, whose humanity we are happy in having an opportunity to celebrate, and hand down to posterity. And in the course of this delectable history, we shall ever pay the greatest respect to virtue and merit, though

we should meet them either in obscurity or distress; and treat ignorance, her companion insolence, and villainy, though in ever such exalted stations, with all that *hauteur* and contempt they deserve. A certain sign that the author is poor, and has always kept very low company.

The conversation of the two boys, who were placed on the opposite side of the fire from our travellers, served to dissipate their chagrin, and amuse them, until they were properly clothed again. As they seemed unable to purchase a pot of the cheering liquor themselves, Mr. Wills, (for so I shall distinguish one of the strangers with whom our readers may hereafter become better acquainted, provided they have patience to travel through this tiresome work) desired the landlady to supply them with a pot, which request, with a great deal of good nature, she immediately obeyed. For such was the humility of our hostess, that she waited with as much alacrity on the poor as on the rich; wisely arguing, that the money she received from a cottager was equal in value to a like sum, though paid by a first lord of the treasury. And herein she

she differed and dissented from those inn-keepers on the great western road, who think no money so good or so valuable as that which is spent by the nobility. And of the like opinion are the keepers of those very respectable houses, *Almack's*, *the Thatch'd House*, *Boodle's*, and the more celebrated receptacle for the most honourable institution this island ever boasted, called, *The Coterie*, and which we hope may last, like the empire of the Medes and Persians, for ever. The boys soon became a little elevated by the liquor which the good woman, more from the reflection on the wetness of the night, than the person who was to pay for it, made very strong and rich; and so much was she pleased with her company, that she drank heartily and often of her own brewage, which she ever and anon, and with great justice, praised exceedingly. They began to talk of their own affairs, quite regardless of the persons who were present. "Well, Jack," said one of them, "one does not know where one may meet a friend: you see, master there gave us a pot, when we could not afford to get one ourselves."

“Why, Tom,” said the other, “you
“can afford it very well; what do you say
“so for?”

“No, I cannot,” replied Tom, “for
“master has not paid me any wages these
“three weeks, and I am glad to live as I
“can.”

“Not pay your wages! Sure master is a
“plaguy rich man, and does not want money;
“why doesn’t he pay you then?”

“Why, mother has a cottage from him
“that lies at the other side of the common
“there, and is to give two guineas a year
“rent for it; now, she has been three quar-
“ters and above in it, without paying, and
“so master would not let her stay any longer,
“and threatened to turn her out; and then
“sister Bett and Bill must have begged: so
“he told mother that he took me out of
“charity to work with him, and she cried
“and took on; so I heard it, and went next
“day to master, and told him I’d work with
“him for nothing till the rent was paid, and
“not turn mother out; and so he agreed:
“and in three weeks more I shall clear it,
“and

“and then she may live there still. And we
 “have been very unfortunate, for a fitchew
 “kill’d us seven young geese in one night,
 “that wou’d have help’d to pay the rent, and
 “broke a parcel of eggs where the old one
 “was sitting; so poor mother cou’d not help
 “it; but I ought to do what I can, and tho’
 “I mayn’t have my belly full so often as I
 “used, what signifies that? — I shan’t be
 “a bit the worse man—so—Here’s to you,
 “Jack. — Master, your health.”

CHAPTER II.

*In which WILLS behaves, in the opinion
of many people, very foolishly.*

NOT a word of this conversation was lost
 upon Wills, who listened to it very
 attentively, though the remains of a cold
 baked shoulder of mutton, which originally
 weighed about fourteen pounds, and was
 then reduced to ten, was laid before him,
 together with some bacon and eggs; and
 though the latter were very excellent, he
 has been often heard to declare the bacon
 was not fit to be eaten, for it stunk, and

was rusty. His companions indulged their appetites; but his curiosity at the beginning of this relation and his indignation against the oppressive landlord at the conclusion of it, prevented his partaking the repast which was so agreeably and hastily devoured by his companions, whose stomachs were not to be satisfied so easily. "Pray, my lad," said Wills, "is this master of yours a rich man?"

"Oh lord, Sir, I wish you was half as rich; tho' mayhap you may, as you be a Londoner. He has a matter of forty men at work every day in the year, and has a great mort of land here all about. Your servant, Sir, I wish you a good night, and thank you kindly."

"Are you going home?"

"Yes, master, I am; for the rain won't give over this night, I believe; so your servant, master, thank ye."

Wills hastened out after him, and stopping the boy when he had got near the door, asked him, what he was to have for supper at home that night?

"No-

“Nothing, master; I am used to go to
“bed without a supper.”

“And I,” said Wills, turning hastily
from him, “that never had it in my power
“to relieve the distresses of my parents, have
“a good supper every night. How much
“worthier is he than me! Stay there till I
“come to you again, Tom.”

By this time his friends had finished their
suppers, and prevented his asking the unne-
cessary question if they had eaten sufficiently.
His care then was, by several persuasive
arguments, to prevail on the kind-hearted
hostess to part with the remains of the shoul-
der of mutton. When he declared his want
of it, “What, all Sir?”

“Yes, faith, I want it all; and wish
“there was more of it.”

“Indeed we have nothing else in the
“house for dinner to-morrow, and there is
“no possibility of getting any thing till
“the day after; and what must we do
“ourselves?”

“I do

"I do not know," replied Wills, "but
"I believe you can get a shoullder of mutton
"sooner than the poor people I am going to
"send this to."

Humane and good-natured as our land-
lady was, this argument had no sort of
effect upon her; very judiciously determin-
ing, that charity began at home: but at
length she was prevailed on to part with it,
upon Wills's giving her at least double the
value of it, which she declared would scar-
cely pay the expence of a messenger being
sent to the next market town, tho' within
two miles, to bring her a dinner next day.
This bargain, however disadvantageously
concluded, gave great satisfaction to Wills,
who hurried out to the door where the poor
boy was waiting for him. "Here, my lad,
"here's some supper for your mother and
"you; and d'ye hear, here's a quarter of a
"guinea for you, and take care and behave
"well."

"Sure," says the boy, "you mistake,
"Sir; you never saw me before, and you
"can't intend this for me."

"Yes,

“Yes, yes, I do: go, go along home
“as fast as you can.”

“Then God Almighty blefs you,” adds
the boy, dropping on his knees, “for now
“I fhall pay this to my mafter, and another
“fortnight will clear us, and then we fhall
“live as we did before.”

“Get up, firrah,” faid Wills impatiently,
“don’t ftay to thank me, but go home as
“faft as you can.”

The appearance of anger in his bene-
factor, frightened the boy, and he went
off as hard as he could run. Wills return-
ed to his company, and after drinking a
couple more pots of the reviving cordial,
they retired to their chambers fatigued with
their walk. In one room were two flock
beds, which Wills, and one of his compa-
nions, took poffeffion of; the other, who
was a little indisposed, was indulged with
the beft bed in the houfe.

Here we fhall leave them to enjoy their
reft, fweetened by wearinefs, and take the
opportunity of bringing the reader to the
more

more intimate acquaintance of Wills and his company, and assign the reason for this long walk of theirs.

C H A P T E R III.

In which the reader may satisfy his curiosity, if he has any.

FRANCIS WILLS, whom our reader has just had a glimpse of, was the only son of a gentleman, who, in the early part of his life, had met several mortifications from the severity and moroseness of his father's temper; and who, in truth, was remarkable for little else than possessing great property, and indulging his passions to their utmost extent; in consequence of which, an attempt to resist his will and pleasure, or to contradict him, never failed to draw down his utmost fury upon the offending party. He had only this one boy, for his wife died when she had been married to him about three years; and as the gentleness of her disposition could but badly support the ill treatment she continually met with, her spirits at last became broken; and not having
a wish

a wish to live, she indulged her despair and melancholy, 'till the kindly hand of death drew the curtain of everlasting night, and finished her sorrows and her life together. The old man lamented for a short time the loss of his wife, not so much from any principle of tenderness, as from the reflection what a prudent and good housekeeper he had lost, for in this light he chiefly beheld her; and he grieved for the trouble he should have in looking out for another, on whom he could rely, and who would prove as faithful to him as his wife had been. But, on the other hand, he was released from an enormous expence; for, during the last declining months of the poor lady's existence, she was continually attended by the physical tribe, who, though they found the disorder she was afflicted with beyond the reach of medicine, yet constantly visited her, and, according to her husband's report, never, in all that time, refused a fee. All their solicitations and recommendations to induce her to consent to a change of air were in vain; she found herself decay and should she recover, it would only renew the scene of her former uneasinesses; and while she was ill, though she was not treated with the
ten-

tendernefs ſhe merited, yet there was a temporary ſuſpenſion of her ſufferings. She remained, therefore, where ſhe was, which ſhe knew would gratify the avarice of her huſband, who dreaded the expences which would neceſſarily attend her going to any water-drinking place, and expired under her evils. Whether it was, that the old gentleman's fame was bruited abroad in the country, and the ladies dreaded him; or whether he thought one wife was ſufficient for any man; or from what other reaſons we know not, but, certain it is, that he never married a ſecond time. His attention was dedicated to his ſon, who, providentially for him, was placed under the tuition of the curate of the pariſh in which his father lived. This curate was one of thoſe inſtances of neglected merit, which are ſo frequently met with in the church. With every requiſite to form the divine and the gentleman, with a wife and two children, he was obliged to ſubſiſt on fifty pounds a year. He had no friends, and it was very proper that he ſhould be ſtarved for having the imprudence to marry. However, there was one happineſs attended him in this cure; for the rector was ſo much attached to his bottle, and

and his fondness for good living, that he seldom troubled him, and conscious that he was much inferior to him in point of literature, he wisely avoided all disputes and altercations with him. The parishioners liked and were so well satisfied with him, that the rector was at liberty to follow his favourite pursuits, whilst the curate was admired and esteemed by every body. *Laudatur et alget*, might have been his motto with the greatest propriety. To this man's care was the boy, our hero's father, when about five years old, committed, with an appointment of fifty pounds a year, with which, and some presents considerable to him, tho' but insignificant in the eyes of the old man, his life passed more comfortably than heretofore. With him the young lad remained till he was fit to go to the university, for his father determined he should have more sense than himself, if possible. And here we must do him the justice to say, that he supported him very genteelly while he was at Oxford, and intended to have given him a profession to enable him to get his bread in case any accident should happen to him.

In his visits to his father's, during the vacations, he saw and admired the daughter of a neighbouring farmer, whose name was Whitlock. A man whose education and family were very nearly equal with Mr. Wills's father; and though he was one, who might be reckoned warm and comfortable, yet could he by no means be put in competition with him in point of wealth. The young people, mutually enamoured, soon came to a proper explanation; and in a little time the father perceived the young gentleman's attachment to his daughter, and having asked her about it, she very ingenuously confessed, "that Mr. Wills had endeavoured to
"render himself agreeable to her, and had
"succeeded; that he always deferred asking
"his consent to render him happy with her,
"till he was entirely assured of her inclination for him; and that he should then be
"more properly entitled, and with greater
"probability of success could also ask his
"father's permission to marry her, whose
"consent he had no doubt of, from the great
"tenderness and generosity he had lately
"experienced from him."

"Well, child," returned the father, "I
"have heard a very good character of Mr.
"Wills,

“Wills, and believe he is an honest young
 “man; his father and I have been old
 “acquaintances, and when he comes here
 “again I will speak to him, and ask him
 “what his intentions are towards you; and
 “then go over and tell his father the whole
 “affair, and settle matters with him, if it
 “shall prove agreeable. If it does, I have
 “no objection to him as a son.”

This made his daughter very happy: and when young Wills came the next day, she told him of it: the nearer he was to the goal of his desires, the happier he was; and every approximation rendered him additional pleasure, as it removed a dreaded difficulty. The consent and approbation of the father of his dear Nancy, was a great stroke in his favour: and he was congratulating himself upon it in his own breast, when Mr. Whitlock came in upon the lovers, as they were sitting together, holding a consultation on the ticklish situation of their affairs. “Mr. Wills,” said the old man, rather abruptly, “I have been acquainted with your attachment to my daughter, and hope you mean honourably by her.”

"It is my only intention."

“I do not doubt it; but as your father
“knows nothing of this, it will not be pru-
“dent to suffer you to continue visiting my
“daughter, till he has given his approbation.
“I confess I should like you to be married
“to Nancy very well; and, as far as I can,
“will forward the matter: I will give you
“two thousand five hundred pounds down
“with her; and, as she is my only child,
“you shall have all I am worth, which will
“be as much more, at my death. I do not
“know how this may please your father,
“but as he and I have been old neighbours,
“I will go over and smoke a pipe with him
“this afternoon, and talk over this matter.”

The young people, full of acknowledgements and gratitude for his good nature, returned him all their thanks, and when he set out on the journey that was to determine their happiness or misery, sent forth their prayers for his success. Wills, who knew his father's temper extremely well, was not a little apprehensive, that the event of this negociation would not answer their expectations or wishes; however, he did not

not communicate his fears to his poor Nancy, who sat in a state of anxious uncertainty by his side. He endeavoured to dispel her apprehensions, and to inspire her with hope, though he had but little himself.

While they were thus employed, Mr. Whitlock had reached old Wills's house, and found him at home and alone. "So neighbour," quoth Wills.

"Servant, fervant, Master Wills," replied Whitlock; "I am come to smoke a pipe with you."

"Aye and welcome," quoth Wills.

The pipes were brought; their tobacco-boxes, replete with the sweet-scented Oroonoko, were produced; and a jug, foaming with potent October, was placed in the midst. Already were they half enveloped in clouds of smoke; and already had they discussed the principal topics of conversation and country news in their own way. The third glass of ale had begun to elevate their spirits, when Whitlock, earnest to introduce the subject he came about, began the following conversation.

CHAPTER IV.

*In which some parental, political principles,
are properly displayed and discussed.*

“WHERE’S your son, Master Wills?”
said Whitlock.

“I don’t know; he’s gone abroad some-
“where or other; he’s seldom at home, I
“think. But I hear he’s very often at your
“house; Nan’s grown a smart girl.”

“Why, yes, she is; and a good girl too:
“and your son does come often to our house,
“it is true.”

“Ah, I’ll engage he’s a dead hand after
“a girl; I was so myself at his age,” said
the father. “Look well at home, neighbour,
“after him.”

“I don’t think I need be afraid of Nancy,
“for she is a very modest, good girl; but I
“don’t like your son coming to see her so
“often, unless you were acquainted with it.”

“Why

“Why, so I be; I knew it all along.”

“Well, then, I suppose as how all matters may be made easy, then.”

“What matters?” said Wills, taking his pipe from his mouth.

“Why, what matters have a young man
“and woman to settle, when they like one
“another? Look you, neighbour Wills, you
“and I have been a great while acquainted,
“and your son likes my daughter; now, if
“you like on’t too, let it be a match, I say.
“I’ll give the girl five-and-twenty hundred
“pounds down, and the rest of what I am
“worth at my death. Now, what say you?
“Will you give the boy as much?”

“No, that I won’t,” replied Wills, with
inexpressible furliness. “What, give that
“fool of a boy so much money! he would
“not know what to do with it. Besides,
“I have no notion of making him independent
“while I live; no, no, he shall wait for my
“death: there’s a little estate he must have,
“when he is five-and-twenty, in spite of me;
“but I have no notion of spiriting a boy up,
B 4 “by

“by giving my money out of my own
“pocket while I am alive, to tell me at last,
“as I suppose will be the case, that he does
“not care a farthing for me. When you
“want to make a child obedient, keep him
“in fear of you. I’ll have none of these
“doings here with me.”

“That’s hard, too, Master Wills: the
“young man seems very fond of my girl, and
“I don’t doubt but she will make him a good
“wife, and very happy. Come, come,
“think better on it. What signifies it to
“you, if the girl has not all the fortune you
“might expect: to be sure you are a rich
“man; but if the young people like one
“another, you know ——”

“What the devil’s that to me?” cries
Wills, in a rage, dashing his pipe against
the table, and breaking it into a thousand
pieces. “What have I to say to that? Is
“it any thing to me whether he has a mind to
“be fond or no? It is a pretty story, truly:
“because I am his father, am I to be account-
“able for all his foolish actions? No, damn
“me if ever I give him a farthing while I
“can keep it from him. So then we should
“have

“have him noseing me at the vestry, and at
 “the quartersessions, and these places; and
 “after he was once settled, he would have
 “no more regard for me than an old cart-
 “horse. No, no; I’ll keep him obedient to
 “me, if keeping money from him will do
 “it: and so, Master Whitlock, you may do
 “as you please with your daughter, and I
 “will do as I please with my son.”

“I don’t care three farthings for you or
 “your son,” replies Whitlock; “and I’ll be
 “damn’d if you or your son shall ever touch
 “a penny of mine. Adfheart, sure she is as
 “good as you.”

Away he flung, and left old Wills by
 himself; muttering, and cursing every thing
 and every body that was near him. When
 Whitlock arrived at home, he found the
 lovers still together. Young Wills’s fears
 were realized, when he saw the old man
 enter the room. “It is all over,” said he,
 starting up; “I must relinquish my dearest
 “hopes, through my father’s severity.”

“You must indeed, Sir.”

"I knew it, and dreaded it. Nancy,
"must we part?"

"You must, Sir. Your father's treatment of me was not to be borne, nor
"will I bear it. From henceforth you must
"forbear visiting my daughter. I have no
"objection to you."

The poor girl sat drown'd in tears; and
her father, at Wills's request, related all
that had passed between his father and him;
and, concluding with once more declaring,
that he should have nothing to do with his
child, begged of him to retire, and sent his
daughter up stairs.

Wills took his leave, and mounted his
horse with a heavy heart, and, in no very
sweet temper, went homewards. It was
totally indifferent to him where he went:
but as he had something of his father's disposition in him, and was much offended at
what had passed, it naturally occurred to
him to revenge himself upon the object who
had occasioned his present misfortune, which
was no other than his own father. Soured
with the disappointment, and stung to the
heart

heart by the refusal he had met with, he hastened home. The father was in no better humour than the son; they seemed prepared for an engagement; and waited not long for an opportunity to begin. "Pray, Sir," said the father, "how came it into your head that I would give you five-and-twenty hundred pounds?"

"Because, Sir, I thought you wished to see me happy, and without Miss Whitlock I never shall be so: I have long loved her, and believe she is worthy my affections: her father was willing to contribute every thing in his power to make us so, and I am very sorry that mine should put a trifling sum in competition with my eternal happiness."

"What Sir, do you begin already to make reflections? I see what a fine pass I should have brought myself to, if I had been foolish enough to have complied with your desires: make yourself easy, for by G— you shan't have a halfpenny from me while I live."

"You may keep it, Sir," replied the son; "I want it only as the means of making
"me

“me blest with the woman I love. But,
“as you prefer your money to me, it is
“proper that you should be left to enjoy it.
“In a few months my grand-father’s estate
“will become mine, by virtue of his will: I
“shall then trouble you no longer. I am
“obliged to you for what you have done for
“me, but your last action is sufficient to
“cancel every tie. I take my leave of you,
“Sir. You can have no regard for a son,
“whose happiness is so very indifferent to
“you. If you could not have afforded to
“pay such a sum, your refusal might have
“been justified. But I find myself growing
“warm, and if I stay much longer, may
“unhappily fail in that respect I owe to a
“father. Farewell, Sir.”

He stalked out of the room, and, calling for his horse, took the road for London.

His father remained motionless after his departure: so great was the conflict in his bosom between anger, surprize, and love for his son, who had never given him the least offence before. At length his fury, assisted by his avarice, got the better of every other

other consideration, and he began to shew his return to his speech and powers, by throwing those things that were nearest him into the fire with great dexterity, at the same time thundering out vollies of unconnected curses. His servants suffered in proportion; and so great was his resentment against his son for treating his paternal authority with so little respect, that when his rage had subsided a little he determined never to have any thing more to say to him. Full of this good intention, he sent for a attorney the next day to make his will. As his property was chiefly personal, and of his own acquiring, he might dispose of it tho whom he pleased; but this was a point not easily to be settled: for though he had two brothers and a sister, who were married and had families, yet having quarrelled with them all, and never spoken or had any intercourse with them for a great number of years, he determined to take no notice of them, or their families. He then turned his eyes to his late wife's family, and there he settled at once. She was the eldest daughter of four when he married her, and there was a great disparity in their ages; for her sisters were mere children when she was married to

to Mr. Wills, who, upon that occasion, acted with unusual generosity, and took her without any fortune. Indeed her father could not very well spare it, as his affairs were not a little embarrassed; so Wills, who was fond of her, made a virtue of necessity, and received her without a penny. Yet, as we are obliged to adhere to truth, we must confess, that he prided himself so much upon this action, that in the fullness of his heart, and especially when he was angry with his wife, which happened very frequently, he used to recount this disinterested action of his with great pomp, extolling himself, and depreciating her in very indelicate terms. This she was obliged to suffer: her end has been already related. To those remaining sisters of his wives he therefore resolved to leave all his fortune. His will was prepared and executed in due form, and he began to relapse into his former insensibility, as his revenge was gratified.

C H A P T E R V.

*Contains the history of Mr. FRANCIS
WILLS's father.*

YOUNG Wills left his father's house in some despondence. He was turned out upon the world's wide common, without a friend, and very little money in his pocket. He was never in such a situation before. He had always a home to resort to: but where should he fly to now? At last he recollected a Mrs. Rickfall, who formerly had lived at Oxford, and now resided in London. She had been always a good friend of his; and having met with misfortunes, was obliged to keep a coffeehouse. To her therefore he determined to go. He met with a very civil reception from her, and, as he frankly and openly disclosed his present situation, and the cause of it, she treated him with great tenderness. After his arrival in town, he wrote several letters to his dear Nancy, to none of which he received any answer. At last he was assured, and from undoubted authority, that she was married, obliged by her father to take the first man that presented him-

himself, who was approved of by him. On the receipt of this piece of intelligence he fell into a deep melancholy, from which he could scarcely be recovered. Mrs. Rickfall used every means in her power to amuse him, but in vain: however, her daughter Charlotte, young, handsome, gentle, and fond of Wills, succeeded much better. By consoling and indulging him, she at last stole into the place Miss Whitlock formerly possessed in his heart. By being his eternal companion, she, at length, became necessary to him; and his gratitude to her for taking so great a share in his troubles, supplied, for a while, the office of affection. When he first came to Mrs. Rickfall's, he wanted about seven months of the age prescribed for the enjoyment of his little estate, which amounted to about two hundred and twenty pounds a year. He had been with her but a little above two, when he heard the news of Miss Whitlock's marriage. There is no hour in which the heart is less guarded than that of distress. How many tender passions insinuate themselves in that moment, and in what different disguises! — Wills, who had, till that time, beheld Charlotte Rickfall with the eyes of indifference, now thought he saw charms

charms displayed in every action and turn. He was in affliction; and gratitude to her mother, who had treated him all along with great generosity and kindness, made him look more respectfully on the daughter. He was neglected by his father; and, well knowing the severity of his temper, judged, and very rightly, that he should never be recalled to his house again. "This young girl is agreeable; she is more, is really handsome; is good tempered; and, by her behaviour, gives me room to think I am not indifferent to her. What should prevent me then" [for thus he reasoned with himself] "from taking a woman to my bosom who really feels a passion for me? I want only a return to that fondness I wish to inspire: and if my once beloved Nancy had resisted the importunities, or violence of her father, I would have lived for her alone." Whenever he reflected thus, he constantly grew melancholy and uneasy; but the remembrance of the pleasures he had lost was soon dissipated and banished, by the attention and assiduities that Charlotte constantly shewed him. He was pleased with them; they became habitual; and the smallest compliment he could pay her, was to

appear equally pleased with and attentive to her. The time was now nearly elapsed, and he was priding himself on his assuming his independence, and becoming master of his fortune. "How can I better employ it," said he, "than in making the girl happy, who has attached and devoted herself to me, from the mere impulse of passion and regard; for so I am at liberty to think by her behaviour to me." He addressed himself to her mother, whose consent he readily obtained; and soon after was married to Charlotte, whose affection seemed to encrease every day. — The case was otherwise with Wills. The fit of passion was past, and he began to look upon things with other eyes. He did not possess that affection for his wife, which, founded in the heart, and matured by judgement, attaches us irrevocably to the beloved object. He frequently formed comparisons between Mrs. Wills and his Nancy, whom he considered as sacrificed, and which were always rather injurious to the former. The disgust he began to conceive for his wife was increased by the fondness she always shewed him, and which, as he had no inclination to return it, became troublesome. He sought relief from his own thoughts in
com-

company, and home was the last place he wished to go to. "Perhaps," said he to himself, as he was going out one day, "poor Nancy is as unhappy as I am; and my "cruel father, by not parting with that "money which he cannot enjoy himself, has "made us both wretched. Yet it would be an "alleviation of my grief, if I thought she was "happier than I am." These reflections were intolerable, and he did every thing in his power to get rid of them. Variety of company induced expence, and cash must be had. He mortgaged: and engaging in play one night, lost a considerable part of the money. Soured with his ill fortune, weary of himself and the world, and accusing the severity of his destiny, he was surprized by a message from his father, who desired to see him instantly. As he was in a good turn of mind to reproach him for all the ills his avarice had brought on him, he obeyed the summons. He found his father waiting for him at a neighbouring tavern. "So, Sir," said the old gentleman to him, "I hear you are "married.

"I am, Sir."

“And how came you to have the assurance to marry without asking my leave?
“To go and throw yourself away!”

“Sir,” replied the son, interrupting him, and speaking with a stern and determined voice, “your refusal to let me marry where
“the interests of my heart were engaged,
“has been the destruction of me, and in a
“little time you will be childless. Your
“wealth will never procure you another son;
“and, but that you are my father, and,
“badly as you have treated me, are entitled
“to respect, I would revenge myself upon
“the author of all my misery, which encreases on me every hour. Farewell, Sir. A
“small part of that sum you possess, and
“which to you is useless, would have made
“me happy.”

He flung out of the room, nor would he return to hear what his father wanted to say to him. He found himself grow warm, and feared lest, in his passion, he should be guilty of an outrage towards the author of his being, that he should never forgive himself for; and this he dreaded the more, as he was at that moment pressed by those very evils

evils his father had brought on him. The old man, finding himself thus treated by his son, returned to the country, fully resolved to make no alteration in his will, which he found some inclination in himself to have done, if he could have brought his son to terms; who grew more unhappy every hour, and to banish reflection, attached himself very closely to his bottle. This was expensive; more money was raised upon his estate; and his uneasiness was rather augmented than diminished, when Mrs. Wills informed him she was with child. Though he had no affection for her, yet he always treated her with tenderness and civility, which served to render her life tolerable, though not happy. His attention and care of her when pregnant, and his assiduities when delivered of a fine boy, whose adventures fill the following sheets, gave some hopes of returning love: but these hopes were vain. He pursued his former mode of living, and in a twelvemonth after the birth of the child, fell a sacrifice to the bottle. Thus ended his days, who might have been an ornament to society, a comfort to his friends, and the happy father of a respectable family, had he been indulged in the reasonable wishes of his

heart. On the contrary, he lived without peace, and expired without hope, convinced from his own sufferings, that he could not be more miserable in any other world than he had been in this.

CHAPTER VI.

In which is proved the great truth of the adage, that "it is an ill wind which blows no-body good."

MRS. WILLS, who really loved her husband, remained inconsolable. — She had very little to support herself with, and a child to maintain. Her mother, who was yet living, took her to her house, in hopes the grandfather would do something for the boy. While this was the situation of the family in London, other affairs were transacted in the country. Mr. Kingly, father to old Wills's late wife, died much about this time, and left his daughters a bare subsistence, and no more. Their want of fortunes, not more than their want of beauty, prevented their getting husbands, which the two elder, Patience and Prudence, long

long had set their caps at: but they were deformed. The younger of the three, Priscilla, was shapely, but very homely, and possessed of more good nature than the other two, whose disappointments in life had rendered their tempers as sour as their manners were ridiculous; nor could all their affectation of piety, or pretended abhorrence of the men, procure them the satisfaction of being praised or admired, or give them the least chance of attaining, what they longed for, the power of changing their names. They were, therefore, very much chagrined, when an eminent attorney in the neighbourhood paid his addresses to Priscilla, and pursued her with extraordinary assiduity. Great though the friendship was in which the sisters lived, yet the preference given to the youngest affected them; and with great diligence they set about prognosticating this affair would come to nothing. Patience, from several very ominous dreams which she had never known to fail with any one, declared positively, it would be no match. Prudence, from coffee-grounds, and the more veritable oracle of a dirty pack of cards, professed herself of the same opinion. Pris, whose good sense and reflection made her

think more reasonably than either of the others, concluded there must *more be meant than met the ear*, and waited patiently till time should unravel the mystery. She did not wait long. Mr. Bickham in a few weeks, after professing his esteem for her person, and adoring the beauties of the mind, which were the most estimable and lasting charms, and assuring her of his entire affection for her, pressed her to name the happy day that would put an end to his anxiety, and render him the joyful companion of her future life. "Mr. Bickham," said she, "it would be
"ungrateful in me not to acknowledge the
"obligation I am under to you, for thinking
"so well of me, as to make me your wife;
"but I must confess there is a particularity in
"your paying your addresses to me, that
"somewhat surprizes me. Far from possess-
"ing those personal beauties which are in
"general the principal recommendation of a
"wife without a fortune, to entitle me to
"the acceptance of a man who holds that
"place in life you do, and who has a good
"fortune, you solicit my hand."

"I certainly do, madam," said the lover, interrupting her. "That self-denial, that
"good

“good sense which can look upon things in
“the manner you do, is more valuable to
“me, than either beauty or riches. I want
“neither. The sensible friend is the charac-
“ter I seek in a wife, and which I am con-
“vinced I shall find in you. Therefore,
“madam, the objections you make are very
“trifling.”

“I cannot be induced to think so; and
“that prudence you so highly commend, will
“not suffer me to enter into an alliance with
“a man to whose fortune I cannot add; nor
“will my spirit permit me to think of becom-
“ing a burden to you, or the reproach of
“your family. The cloaths I should wear,
“the very food I should eat, would eter-
“nally remind me of my obligations to, and
“my dependence on, you; and if equality
“is necessary for the preservation of friend-
“ship, it is more highly so for the happiness
“of the marriage state.”

“Will you allow nothing for affection,
“my dear madam?” replied Bickham. “Su-
“rely it is a pleasure and an happiness to
“oblige those we love.”

“It may so,” interrupted the lady; “but
“you have ever been esteemed a prudential
“man, and are of that age when passion has
“began to subside: a little time might make
“an alteration in your affection, and I should
“suffer in my own opinion, as you would
“not think yourself bound to regard me in
“the same light as if I had brought a fortune
“along with me equal to your merits, or
“your expectations. Therefore, Sir, you
“will receive this as my final determination,
“that I cannot think of marrying you in my
“present situation.”

This was positive. The lady paused, and Bickham looked very black upon the occasion: he had a desire to speak, yet hesitated. At last he thus addressed himself to her. “And suppose, madam, that any
“lucky chance should make an alteration in
“your fortune, would my person or propo-
“sals be so disagreeable to you, that you
“would refuse me?”

“It is only a supposition: and that is a
“ground I cannot go upon. However, if I
“was sure——”

This

This bait took.

“May I then promise myself that happiness?”

“It is not impossible.”

“Then, madam, let me announce the fortunate change in your circumstances, and receive the reward of your hand.”

Miss Priscilla expressed great surprise, silently rejoicing at the success of her scheme; and Bickham soon explained himself fully, acquainting her of every circumstance we have before related, concerning the making the will in their favour, the marriage and death of young Wills, and the birth of the child; adding, that the old man began to lament the loss of his son, and abhor his former treatment of him, and that he was in a bad way, not expected to live long; concluding with assuring her, that she had nothing to fear from any contest that might arise about the disposal of his property, as he had taken the greatest care to draw the will in the strongest and most binding terms.—Miss Priscilla thanked him for his kindness in acquaint-

acquainting her with this unexpected turn of fortune, and had no doubt of her being very secure, as he was concerned in drawing the will. As to giving him any positive answer, at present, she desired to be excused, as this account had really fluttered her spirits so, she could not express herself; but she hoped to see him soon again. After recommending silence and secrecy to her in the strongest manner, he took his leave, promising to return with all possible expedition, as he could not live out of her sight. As soon as ever he was gone, Priscilla hastened to her sisters. Her countenance bespoke her pleasure, and they soon perceived it. "What now," said Prue, "are we to have a wedding soon, that you appear so joyful? you seem mightily pleased."

"I am, indeed; for I have received some very good news."

"I thought I should hear of some good news," replied Pate, "for I dreamed of the devil and a black-handled knife last night."

"You might," replied Pris; "yet my intelligence concerns neither: but if you will listen, I will tell you all I know."

She

She accordingly informed them of every thing she had learned from Mr. Bickham. Though their joy was great at being thus, so unexpectedly, raised from a state of penury to independence and fortune, yet they could not debar themselves from the pleasure of assuring Pris, that they had a prescience of this affair; and the one told her dreams, and the other repeated some lucky omens which had occurred. However, when they had paid these compliments to their own sagacity and perspicuity, the three sisters entered into close council, and finally agreed that, should matters turn out as Mr. Bickham had prognosticated, they would live together, and the survivors should have all the fortune. This was ratified in the most solemn manner; and they began to expect the old man's death with an avidity that was very natural. In a short time Bickham rode over to them, and, as it was near ten o'clock at night when he reached their house, they conjectured, very reasonably, that something extraordinary was the cause of this untimely visit. And herein were they not deceived: for he told them he had heard Mr. Wills had a paralytic stroke that day; and, to make himself sure of the truth of the matter, he
went

went to see the physician who was called in on the occasion, who delivered it as his opinion, that he could not live a week longer. He felicitated his mistress upon this lucky accident, as he termed it; and went away. It is needless to inform the reader, who we are sure has much penetration, that it was not so much the elegance of Priscilla's person, or the charms of her understanding, as the fortune she would be entitled to on Mr. Wills's death, and the prospect she had of inheriting the respective portions of her sisters, she being the youngest, that induced Bickham to pay his addresses to her. Indeed as he was a prudent man, he had her in his eye from the moment he drew the old man's will; and he reasoned, not injudiciously, that he should succeed in his application to the lady, by the care and interest he took in serving her. He therefore rejoiced not a little at this annunciation of the old man's departure; and so sure was he of the match, that he absolutely had began to treat concerning the purchase of an estate of eight hundred pounds a year, that was to be sold in the neighbourhood, and which he thought would be a bargain.

CHAPTER VII.

Many things fall between the cup and the lip. A disappointment.

OLD Wills's death evened as the physician had foretold. The Misses Kingley, who were executrices, proved the will, and took possession of the effects and estate of the deceased, which fell very little short of sixty thousand pounds. Bickham was extremely active and assiduous, and nothing could equal his disinterestedness upon this occasion. Always ready at every call; and so attentive, that he would undoubtedly have attracted the regard of Priscilla, did she not conceive that the prospect of enjoying her fortune stimulated his diligence. Bickham was not a little pleased in finding the sum so much larger than he expected; and the civility with which he had been treated during his transacting this business, had realized his hopes, and he looked upon himself as absolutely possessed of the fortune of Priscilla; for whom, if the truth was known, he had but little regard. During the hurry of the funeral, the preparations for appearing in mourn-

mourning, and receiving the visits and congratulations of the company in the country, he was obliged to be silent; nor did he once mention his passion. The respectful distance he observed, and the attention he paid to his dear mistress, entitled him, the first opportunity he had, to express his inability to remain in such a situation any longer, and to press her to put an end to his probation, and complete his happiness, by bestowing her hand on him.

“Sir,” replied the Lady, “I must act as
“honourably by you, as you have done by
“me. I am under infinite obligations to you,
“and have not a proper return in my power
“to make you. For though I feel not that
“passion for you which is requisite to make
“matrimony a state of rapture, yet I think I
“could live very happily with you:” [his
hopes began to dilate.] “But I have entered
“into a mutual agreement with my sisters,
“by which we have bound ourselves in a
“large penalty, above half our fortunes, never
“to marry, or leave each other while alive.
“This will be a sufficient reason for declining
“the honour of your addresses for the future.”

She

She stopped. Bickham was thunder-struck. His hopes were now like a bladder compressed. "Perhaps, madam," said he, "there may be a means to set aside this agreement, and to avoid the payment of this penalty, if I could see the deed."

"There is no occasion, Sir," said she, "for it was done with my consent."

"And so, madam, I have been made a fool of at last."

"Not by me. Sir,"

"Yes, madam, you gave me hopes."

"You imagined so, Sir; but I must take my leave of this conversation. The tea waits, will you drink any?"

He refused, and they parted without ceremony. The next day he sent in a swinging bill for his trouble and expences; and endeavoured, by that means to indemnify himself for the loss he sustained, by Priscilla's refusing him.

In looking over the papers and letters of Mr. Wills as they came to the hands of Priscilla, who inspected these affairs, they found three or four letters of Mrs. Rickfall's to Mr. Wills, acquainting him of the declining state of her daughter; and how incapable she was of maintaining his grandson. Soon after the old gentleman's decease, and before Mrs. Rickfall could have any knowledge of it, another letter came from her, informing him, that her daughter was dead, and that she was incapable of supporting young Wills. Pris, whose humanity was predominant, immediately called a council of her sisters, and, after some time spent in debate, it was unanimously agreed, that, as they possessed that fortune by the caprice of the grandfather, which should of right belong to the child, and as it had no friends so capable of taking care of it as they were, they should immediately send for him, and educate him properly. Priscilla, whose affection for her sister's offspring was very strong, proposed to go to London herself for him. The proposal was applauded and accepted, and she arrived in town without meeting any accident.

Her

Her curiosity, and impatience to see the child, drove her to Mrs. Rickfall's rather earlier than was customary for strangers to visit, especially in London, and in the morning. Little ceremony was necessary upon the occasion. Pris announced the cause of her coming, which extremely pleasing to the grandmother, who treated her with peculiar civility and good nature. The little Francis, then about three years old, was ordered to be brought in. A little blooming cherub it was: and the aunt immediately perceived, or fancied she perceived, which was just as good, a very striking likeness of her sister, who it seems had engrossed all the beauty of the family. If she was pleased and attracted by the looks of the boy, he was not less so with her. He went to her without reluctance, and remained with her through choice. He saw she was fond of him; and though she was homely, had a great deal of good-nature delineated in her countenance. Instinct directs animals of the domestic kind to attach themselves to those persons whom they see fond, or who take notice of them. Perhaps it may be from some expression in the face. Perhaps it is from some peculiar smell, that a dog or cat

shall pay more regard to, and fondle on one person in a room in preference to any body else. We know not the cause, but the effects are frequent. Children, in the same manner, and perhaps from the same principle of instinct, shall be fonder of one person than another. In this very predicament, luckily for himself, was the boy. Mrs. Rickfall, fearing the child might be troublesome to Miss Kingley, who kept him on her lap, attempted to take him away from her: he refused to go. It was a compliment that pleased her highly. — “But,” said he, “you are my aunt.”

“I am, my dear.”

“But you shall be my mamma, and that shall be my grand-mamma.”

“I will,” said she, “my little angel, in the utmost extent of the word.” And she pressed the smiling babe to her bosom.

Gratitude and humanity compel us to return the fondness of those who seem pleased with us. Every tender passion in the aunts bosom was awakened, and set in motion, by the

the innocent endearments of her nephew. It is needless to say they all ranked on his side. An invitation to dinner was accepted: and Pris agreed to take the boy home with her that night. His grandmother was busy in packing up his little things, and Frank was very happy with his mamma, as he called her; nor did he at night express any great reluctance at parting with Mrs. Rickfall, and the enraptured aunt carried him off in triumph.

No beau was ever prouder of a birthday suit, no coquette of a lover which she had inveigled from her friend, or no squire of a fox that had cost him twelve hours chase, than was Priscilla Kingley in carrying home her little nephew. A child was a novelty, and her sisters received it with pleasure and affection; but Frank liked only his aunt Pris. His infant years passed over as those of most other children; but he always displayed a tenderness and generosity in his disposition which delighted his favourite aunt, who enabled him to indulge the humanity and benevolence of his heart, much against the inclination of her other sisters, and not without frequent prophecies of his becoming a

beggar. — However, these were all thrown away; for Priscilla found something in his actions which her heart could not help approving, and she in secret applauded what her sisters so much censured: She also redeemed his estate, and took it into her own hands.

Bickham, whose vanity would not suffer him to relinquish his hopes so quietly, still thought, that, did he throw himself in her way, he might be again taken notice of. But in this he was totally disappointed; for every attempt he made to renew his intimacy was baffled, and he himself treated with the most mortifying contempt. As he would not suffer himself to be persuaded that his person was disagreeable, or his behaviour the means of his being rejected, he looked out for another cause, and found it in the person of young Wills, whom his aunt was extremely fond of. This made Bickham immediately his enemy; and he began to cast about how to remove this impediment to his wishes. How he succeeded will be more fully treated of in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

The author's learning displayed. The continuation of the history: and another stranger introduced.

WE are informed by some of those writers, who, for the benefit and instruction of mankind, have travelled into divers countries, and each of whom, like another Ulysses,

—— Multorum providus urbes

Et mores hominum inspexit —*

that it is the custom in Spain at the grandest tables, after you have eaten of the first course that is served up, to retire into a contiguous gallery, and there walk about for a stated time, either to recover your appetite, or digest what you have eaten; and, upon a signal given by the Major-domo, the company all return to a fresh service, which the table is covered with. In imitation of that laudable custom it is, without doubt,

D 4

that

* Wisely got an insight into the constitutions and customs of many nations.

that authors have divided their books into chapters: giving their readers, as the Spanish Dons do their guests, an opportunity to recover and refresh themselves. But those opportunities are not so often required where the food is light, tender, and delicate, as where it is gross, luscious and cloying.

But to return to our history. Bickham proposed to himself a great advantage by stealing Frank away, and a much greater by restoring him to his aunt again, in consequence of the diligent search that he should make after him, and thereby gaining the affections of his mistress. He began to contrive, and had actually traced out, a very feasible, plausible scheme, and one that might have succeeded, had not it been for a small accident that prevented the execution of it: This was nothing more than the whole family removing from that part of the country without poor Mr. Bickham's knowledge or privity. How this came to pass should be explained to the reader.

Young Wills was now in his tenth year, and beloved by every body about the country,

try. His honest, open countenance bespoke the goodness of his temper; and his numberless little acts of generosity, his benevolence. He was active as light, and strong beyond his age; and for the little education he had received, shewed signs of an excellent capacity, and great understanding; but his talents wanted cultivation, and there was no opportunity of having them properly directed where they then were: for the poor curate, whom we formerly mentioned as the tutor of Wills's father, and his wife, were both dead; and, but for misses Kingleys, their children would have been in a very poor condition: Old Wills had reproached him for his son's want of duty, and immediately withdrew the fifty pounds a year he had paid him. This affected the curate very much: and the sight of his children, deprived of future sustenance, almost broke his heart. He saw Wills die, and his hopes were extinct; but some of the old servants of the family having mentioned this gentleman to the Misses Kingleys, when they acceded to the estate, they agreed to pay him what Wills did. Pris who was the principal agent upon all these occasions where she had an opportunity of displaying her good nature,

and indulging her humane disposition, when she waited on him to acquaint him with their determination in his favour, and to entreat him to accept this little acknowledgement of his merit at their hands, was so much pleased with the regularity and neatness with which his family was brought up, and so delighted with the persons of his daughters, that she desired they might come frequently to the hall, and assured the father they might depend upon her protection in future life. This change of fortune the poor gentleman was much less able to bear, than the tide of adversity. She took the girls home with her, and the curate and his wife followed them to dinner. Great as his resignation and patience had been in trouble, he could not command himself now. Perhaps, as he grew older, his powers became decayed: However it was, he could not refrain from involuntary bursts of grateful acknowledgements. In vain he endeavoured to stifle them; they oppressed him, and his heart was too full to give a proper vent to his feelings. He strove to dispel the weight that affected his spirits. When he had drank a couple of glasses of wine after dinner, he found himself grow faint; he felt his dissolution

lution approaching. "Ladies," said the reverend old man, "you may wonder at what I am going to say to you, but it is very true: "My last hour approaches, and life ebbs very fast: But I die happy and contented. In these worthy ladies, who have become your voluntary protectresses, you, my dearly-beloved children, will find an asylum; they have offered that to you, which your poor father could not give you." His colour had changed as he began to speak: his daughters perceived it, and were on each side of him on their knees, bathing his chilly hands with their tears: His wife hung in an agony of distress over him. The three sisters wept at the scene, for there was something so solemn and striking in the manner in which he addressed them, that they believed his end really approaching. Pris more particularly *wiped her eyes of drops, which sacred pity had engendered.* Even little Frank abstained from his play, and became a silent, though weeping spectator of a scene that he did not understand: He cried, because every body else did. "I have already given you my word, Sir," said Pris, as he paused; "I here repeat it, that I will never forsake your children."

"And

“And may that holy power which has
“ever protected me, never forsake you! It
“is a comfort to me, that the Almighty has
“allowed me the use of my senses in this my
“last hour; that I have my recollection, and
“am enabled to face death with composure.
“I thank thee, my dearest Nancy, for the
“care thou hast taken of me through my life
“since I was wedded to thee, for thy fidelity,
“and thy goodness. When I am gone,
“watch over these poor children. And you,
“my dear girls, receive the only legacy your
“father has to leave to you, his blessing.
“Already I have sowed the seeds of virtue
“and godliness in your young hearts; may
“they increase, and bear the fruit of good
“works! Follow the advice I have already
“given you. It only remains, to offer my
“thanks to you, ladies, and to tell you my
“prayers shall ascend to the throne of the
“highest, to shewer down upon you ten-fold
“the blessings you have bestowed upon my
“poor friendless children. Lord, now let-
“test thou thy servant depart in peace.”

His voice failed him as he spoke, and
the last word was scarcely audible. He fell
back in his chair; his eyes were closed, and
he

he seemed as if fallen into a deep sleep. The distress and grief his wife and children were in, is inexpressible. Prudence hastened up to her closet, and brought down a cordial of her own distilling, and pouring some of it down his throat, recovered him again a little; he expressed his desire to be carried home. His request was complied with, and the next day he breathed his last. The wife did not long survive him. The two daughters were portioned out to two honest young farmers in the neighbourhood by the sisters, who contributed an equal sum for that purpose, and live very happy. Had he lived, there was no one to whom Pris would have so soon entrusted the care of her nephew as to him; but he was at rest with his fathers, and she was obliged to look out for another.

It had been often debated, in the nocturnal consultations held after supper, among the sisters, what profession or trade Frank should be bred up to. Patience, who, as the eldest, had a right to speak first, declared her opinion that he should be a parson. Prudence, whose skill in distilling of cordials, making plaisters, and compounding diet-drinks we have as yet had no opportunity of
ce-

celebrating, advised, that his attention should be directed to the study of physic; adding, that she should be able to form a judgement of the progress he should from time to time make, as she understood the virtues of herbs, and could venture to say, that when he knew any thing of physic, he would give her *Balsamic cordial* the preference to all the compositions in an apothecary's shop. It was Priscilla's turn. "I don't see," said she, "that there is any occasion to breed him up to any profession: his grandfather's fortune, which should of right be his, we enjoy: that ought to return to him. My proportion of it shall; and, as we have nobody else so near of kin to us, I think it but just that he should have it all, when we have no further occasion for it. It will be sufficient to support him; and we shall augment, rather than decrease it. If he should be obliged to undergo the slavery of acquiring a profession, without having any inclination for it, the law should be the object of his pursuit, as he will be thereby enabled to keep what shall be left him." The other two sisters cried out against law; for, with them, to be a lawyer, and to go to the devil, were synonymous terms. Neither would

would yield; and Pris was near carrying her point. For she foresaw that the fortune of all the family would, at last, center in him: but as she wanted to have him properly educated, and saw no prospect of getting a tutor fit for him where she was, she projected a scheme of going nearer London, where, she reasonably concluded, she should have a greater choice of preceptors, or public places of education. This, however, she feared opposition in from her sisters; but was very much surprized to find the elder less repugnant to the scheme than she expected. However, it was not agreed upon at first, for two reasons; the one was, that which Pate started; "what was to be done with the house
"and lands which, though they then lost by,
"would be still less profitable in a servant's
"or steward's hands." The other Prue was authorefs of; "That in London there no
"possibility of gathering herbs to distil, and
"that it would be a sad expence to come into
"the country every year to prepare materials
"to make her *Balsamic cordial*." Pris happily overruled both objections: to the first she answered, that a very reputable farmer had that day made proposals for renting the farm, which were very advantageous, and she

she particularized them: it was agreed, that it would be much more profitable than even holding it themselves, and they would treat with him about it the next day. The other objection would not have been so easily got rid of, had not Pris recollected, that there was a possibility of her being admitted into the Botanical Garden at Chelsea, where she might improve herself in the study of botany, and have an opportunity of knowing the culture of some exotics, which she would never have a chance of seeing at all if she stayed at home. This seemed very feasible: and the desire they both had of seeing London, got the better of their scruples, and had more weight than all Pris's reasons. Matters were soon and happily settled to the satisfaction of every body, except Bickham and Wills. The former lamented his want of power and opportunity to supplant his rival; the latter was sorry at leaving a place he knew, for one he did not know; and that he should be obliged to quit his play-fellows. The journey was safely performed, and the family all settled in a genteel and commodious house at Chelsea. As the principal reason for leaving the country was, to take care of Frank's education, his aunt
began

began to inspect the academies and public seminaries about that part of the environs of London. Much was promised in the proposals made to the public, but every master performed a great deal more: however, there was something in their manner that she did not approve; nor could all the flattery they bestowed upon the boy, who constantly accompanied her, change her opinion. She had given over her search in that part of the world, and had determined to break fresh ground. When she returned home, she found her two sisters in conversation with the curate and his wife, who had paid them a visit. The curate was an honest, sensible man, and spoke little; but his wife made up for his deficiency, talked eternally, and knew every body. A more agreeable, or more useful acquaintance, could not be procured for the two eldest sisters: they discussed, with the greatest dispatch, points of public concern; and when the curate's wife began to assail the characters, public and private, of every inhabitant in the town, whether known or unknown, they drew their chairs nearer to her, unwilling to lose a word. Pris, whose attention was not much engaged at the relation, could not

E

help

help perceiving a degree of mortification in the husband's countenance, at hearing this torrent of his wife's elocution roar so loudly; a current that he had frequently, though ineffectually, endeavoured to dam, or turn into another channel; she therefore requested his company to see their little garden; and he very gladly accepting the invitation, they left the sisters listening, *arrectis auribus*, to the visitor's tale. But as that concerns us very little, we shall follow the more respectable part of the company into the garden.

The curate observed, as he walked, that so small a spot must appear very bad and confined, after the large garden which he supposed they had in the country.

"It does indeed, Mr. Jefferson," [for that was his name] said Pris: "but tho'
"inconvenient and disagreeable, I must recon-
"cile myself to it, as I was the occasion of
"our leaving the country, for there was no
"opportunity of having my nephew properly
"educated there. I have been at all the
"schools about here, and I like none of them.
"Perhaps you, who have a knowledge of
"these places, can recommend me to some
"sen-

“sensible and honest man, who will take
 “care of my boy’s education: if it was a
 “private tutor, I should be better pleased,
 “and would make it worth his attention to
 “take care of him.”

“Ah Madam! I wish it was in my
 “power to accept your offer: I would do
 “justice by the young gentleman: But my
 “wife, Madam; you see her, and, to my
 “shame, hear her. She is a very good
 “woman, but she will talk; and I wonder
 “how those good ladies, your sisters, can
 “listen to her; for she is not acquainted with
 “half the people she talks about; and I value
 “my peace too much, to try to stop her by
 “a reasonable admonition: but, as I was
 “saying, I should be glad to take him
 “myself, Madam, if I was not apprehensive
 “my wife would spoil him; and I will not,
 “for any emolument which I might receive,
 “hurt the child.”

“I am sorry, Sir, it is so; but you may
 “know some gentleman that would under-
 “take such a task.”

“There is a gentleman, who has lived
 “for near four years about a small mile from

“this place; his acquaintance with me arose
“from his frequenting the church I served.
“His learning is greatly superior to mine in
“every respect; and he is, moreover, an
“accomplished gentleman, when he chooses
“to shew himself; but I believe he has met
“with misfortunes in life, which have redu-
“ced his fortune, soured his temper, and
“thrown a gloom and severity round him,
“that is rather disgusting at the first sight.
“He is now about forty; and, if I don’t
“mistake, he has dropped some hints,
“though distant ones, that he should think
“it a pleasure to superintend the education
“of a young lad of a good disposition, as it
“would serve to amuse him, having no wife
“or family. If you please, I will speak to
“him on this subject, and let you know his
“answer; and had I a child of my own, I
“would sooner entrust him to his care, than
“any other person’s I know.”

Pris thanked him very kindly, and expressed her obligations to him; and the next day he was to go on this important business. Some other conversation succeeded to this; and when they returned to the parlour, the conclave was still sitting, and nearly in the
same

same form, save that the two sisters had approached so close to Mrs. Jefferson, who still was the principal speaker, that their chairs almost touched. Patience was so pleased with her evening's entertainment, that she pressed Jefferson and his wife to stay supper. Pris joined in the entreaty, and they consented. We shall omit the conversation that passed, and hasten to the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

An interview, and the consequence of it.

THE curate, who failed not to remember his promise, went to the gentleman whom he had recommended to Pris, as soon as he could in the morning. Mr. Brewer was surprized at so early and unexpected a visit: but Jefferson soon explained the cause of it. "True," said Brewer, when he had finished, "I have hinted some such thing, and should not now be displeased at the circumstance; but I must see the boy and his aunt before I give any positive answer." Jefferson departed; and, in less than an hour and a

half, he, Frank, and his aunt, were at Brewer's house. He received them in such a manner as shewed his politeness, and the inclination he had to throw off the reserve contracted in a long solitude. He was tall and thin: his face, which had been a good one, was wan and meager; but in his manner there appeared an air and gentility, which bespoke him fitted for another rank in life than that which he possessed. His penetrating eyes, in the midst of an unimportant conversation, were fixed upon Frank; who, on the other hand, regarded him with an equal share of attention, though totally ignorant of the cause of his being brought there. At last Brewer gave Jefferson a hint to shew the young gentleman the garden; who was glad of the proposal; and when they were gone, Mr. Brewer addressed Priscilla. —
“Mr. Jefferson, Madam, has informed you
“of my situation; he also has acquainted me
“with yours. It is very true, that it would
“give me infinite pleasure to have a boy of a
“good disposition with me as a companion;
“I want him to amuse those moments that
“would otherwise be filled with tormenting
“reflections; therefore he must be good-
“tempered and docile. Were he forward,
“or

“whimsical, Madam, but I could not endure
“to see those principles, which I might have
“been labouring to establish for a long time,
“all destroyed in a moment, by an absurd
“indulgence, or a destructive fondness.”

Pris promised an exact obedience to the terms he prescribed, and hinted that his appointment should be as he pleased himself. “I have once already told you, Madam, “that it is not the hope or wish of reward “that induces me to superintend the education of your nephew. It is very true I “have met with misfortunes, and am unhappy,” [Pris now liked him more than she did before] “but I can maintain myself, “though I cannot support the additional expence of the boy: it is from other motives “I undertake this office. I am detached “from the world: nothing shall recall or “oblige me to enter into the busy scenes of “life again; but it would give my heart a “secret pride to see this lad, educated under “my care, enter into life with applause, and “perform his career with honour to himself; “and would rather see him a good citizen of “the world, than a pedantic scholar, or a “rich fool.”

“Well

“Well, Sir,” replied Pris, “I will take
“care that you shall be properly settled,
“whatever your motives may be; and I
“have no doubt but my Frank will be every
“thing you wish to see him. Will you do
“me the favour to take the vacant seat in
“our coach, and dine with us?”

He accepted the invitation; and left Pris while he dressed. He did not detain her long, for his habit was plain; and recommending it both to the aunt and the curate, not to mention the situation he was to appear in hereafter to the boy, he accompanied them to their house. Frank gained upon him every day, and he reciprocally on the boy. He had not visited at the house above four or five times, when an accident determined Brewer's choice.

Frank had not been visible since dinner, and it now approached tea-time. The several enquiries of the servants gave no satisfaction; all they knew was, that he went out, and every body knew that he was not returned again. They began to be uneasy, for he had never been so long absent since he left the country. Various were the speculations

on this occasion. The most probable cause why he absented himself was, that he had strolled to far, and had lost his way. Patience began to relate an horrid dream she had, and concluded that some accident had befallen the boy. "I dreamed of a naked child in the mud, and that is always a sure sign of death," said she. Prudence expressed her impatience for the coffee to be brought in, and positively declaring, she should be able to tell what was become of him, immediately began to give Brewer, who was walking about the room with anxiety and impatience strongly imprinted in his countenance, innumerable instances of the infallibility of her prognostications, and assured him of the great certainty of the science. His politeness would not suffer him to contradict her, neither was he in a humour to enter into any argument to convince her of the absurdity of believing in such things: he therefore let her go on uninterrupted, and paid very little attention to her, or Patience, who reminded her sister of several circumstances which she had forgotten. Priscilla, who loved Frank better than her sisters did their favourite opinions, began to grow extremely uneasy; the tears filled her

her

her eyes, and she sat in a silent state of apprehensive dejection. This was the disposition in the parlour; but in this state things were not suffered long to remain. A great crowd of people came to the door. "Somebody is hurt," said Brewer, getting a glance at the people, "and he is brought here."

"My Frank is dead!" cried Pris, hastening to the door.

"I thought my dream would come out true," said Patience, complimenting her own sagacity. Brewer waited not to hear the remainder of her speech, for she still kept talking, but flew to see the cause of the tumult. His apprehensions about Frank's safety were soon at an end, when he saw him assisting a young man genteely dressed, but whose face and head were covered with blood, and calling to the servants to help him in. Brewer soon lent an hand, and they got him into the house; and seating him in an arm-chair in the breakfasting parlour, sent immediately for a surgeon. As he was senseless, several applications were made to restore him; and we must do justice to Pruden-

dence's balsamic cordial, which was of the greatest service upon this occasion. In the mean time his head was washed, Brewer and Prudence assisting, and a large wound appeared on the side of it: but as their skill in surgery did not extend very far, it was impossible for them to know whether the skull was fractured or not. Frank, assisting the invalid as far as in his power, was called out by the servants, to satisfy the two men at the door, who had brought the gentleman to their house. He had promised to reward them liberally for their assistance, but unfortunately he was without an half-penny. Recourse was had to his aunt, who satisfied them, though she was not so liberal as her nephew would have been; not but these poor fellows would have assisted any body, who was in that condition, without any hope of recompence; yet, when there was a promise of reward, they could not be so deaf to the suggestions of interest as to refuse it. The surgeon came, and gave it as his opinion that the skull was not fractured: but the wound might be attended with a fever, as there was a great contusion, and his patient was very weak through loss of blood: he therefore desired he might be kept
as

as quiet as possible, and ordered him to bed. As Frank's bed was nearest, he was laid there; and when the surgeon was dismissed, they began to enquire where he had found this wounded gentleman. Frank said, that he had seen him in the road, while he was endeavouring to find his way home, as he had strayed beyond his knowledge, and imagined him to be drunk, as he could not sit strait in the saddle; that he ran as fast as ever he could after the horse, and at last, that the gentleman fell off, and the horse ran away, and that he called these men to help him home with him.

"Ah," said Pate, "the drunken beast
"was not capable of taking care of himself."

"Then, aunt," returned Frank, "he was
in more need of our assistance."

Pris heard this reply with heart-felt satisfaction; and casting a look of joy towards him, asked why he came to borrow money from her to pay the men that brought him home? "You know, child, you had five
"shillings in your pocket this morning, what
"have you done with them? How came
you

you by those shoes you have on?" And indeed Frank's feet cut no respectable figure, for his toes appeared very plainly at an aperture in one of the shoes he then wore, if they could, with any propriety, be called shoes; the other was cut all down the side, and had the advantage of many pieces: they were like Merry Andrew's slippers, which had neither heel, sole, or upper-leather.

Frank blushed, and cast his eyes towards his feet: he remained silent.

"Why won't you tell me, my dear?" said Pris.

"I suppose," said Prue, "he has been playing among some black-guard boys, and has lost them."

Indeed I have not," replied he, "but don't ask me about them."

"Aye, Aye," said Pate, "it is as his aunt has said; he has changed them, or played them away."

"I have not, indeed."

"What

“What have you done with them,
“then?”

“Why, I gave them away.”

“To whom?”

“When I lost my way,” said Frank, “I
“went into a little house that I saw, and
“asked my way; and there was a poor
“woman, and she had four children, and
“she was crying; and so I asked her what
“was the matter, and she would not tell
“me; and every thing was so clean about
“the place that I pitied her, and wanted to
“know what ailed her; and at last she told
“me, that her husband was a labouring man,
“but had been sick and confined to his bed
“above a fortnight, and they had no money
“and were afraid he would die; so I gave
“her all the money I had, and told her,
“when my aunt gave me more, she should
“have it. She was afraid to take it, but I
“made her; and then the eldest of the boys
“was to shew me the way home, that I
“might find out their house again; so in com-
“ing over the fields I gave him my shoes,
“and took his; for he is obliged to go about
“for

“for his sick father: and then he shewed
“me how I was to go home; and then I
“saw this gentleman fall from his horse; and
“that’s all.”

“Well, my dear,” said Pris, “and what
“need you be ashamed of telling us what you
“did: you acted very well in relieving the
“sick and the poor.”

“Yes,” added Prue, “but it might not
“be an object of charity; and besides, there
“may be a design in the woman to wheedle
“the child out of his money; but he had no
“occasion to give his shoes away.”

“Indeed I had, aunt,” said Frank, “for
“the poor boy had none to wear, and I
“have two pair more at home here; and
“I’d rather wear these and stay at home,
“than not give the poor boy a pair of
“shoes.”

“Don’t be saucy, Frank,” said Patience.

Pris would not let her go on; but interrupted her, by asking Frank what they should do; for, as they were not settled,
there

there was no bed but his for the sick stranger to lie in, and he could not sleep with him.

“Then I will sit up, and watch him,” said he; “for he wants sleep more than I do; besides he is sick, and I am well.”

“No, no, Frank,” said Pris, “we will contrive that one of the servants shall sit up with your patient.”

“And Frank may sleep with me,” said Brewer, whose heart warmed towards him, “if he chuses a walk at night.”

Frank jumped at the proposal; and, supping early, they set off together for Brewer’s house. He had a spare bed in which he put Frank, who, heartily tired with the exploits of the day, slept soundly. Rising early in the morning, Brewer asked him, where he intended to go. “Home,” said he, “to see how my patient does, as my aunt calls him.”

“It is too soon to disturb him yet: but suppose we go and see how the poor labourer and his family are?”

F

“Ah,”

“Ah,” said Frank, with a melancholy face, “I have no money, and I promised “to give them some the next time I went, “and my aunt won’t give me any till next “week.”

“Never mind that, Frank; we’ll contrive to give them some assistance. Do “you know the way?”

This puzzled him: but he said he would endeavour to find it out. And while they are seeking their way, we shall carry the reader back again to the Miss Kingley’s, where our friends Brewer and Frank left them seated round the table, after supper, the preceding night.

C H A P T E R X.

Which relates several good maxims, proper to be put in practice in the education of children.

THE reader is already informed, that the most material points, in relation to the family, were settled after supper. — The custom was not broken through on this night. The three sisters were perched on their elbows at convenient distances from each other, and had, for about five minutes, observed a most profound silence, which was a wonderful exertion of the taciturn powers in women, all of whom, to tell the truth of them, were rather addicted to loquacity. “Well,” quoth Patience, breaking silence, “do you not think that Frank is bringing a fine expence on us? What are we to do with this sick man? Who knows what he is? And suppose he was to die, what would become of us?”

“Aye,” added Prue, “and who is to pay the surgeon? I will engage he won’t visit and attend this wounded man for

“nothing; and as we sent for him, he will
“make us pay him.”

“The expence cannot be a great deal,”
replied Pris; “and so far from blaming
“Frank, I commend and applaud his gene-
“rosity and humanity. A boy of his age
“may pity a person in distress, but it is not
“every one would relieve him: besides, he
“only puts in practice the golden rule of
“doing as you would be done by.”

“Very pretty truly,” replies Patience;
“and so our house is to be made an hospi-
“tal of, because your nephew chuses to
“bring all the lame and the blind, and sick
“people he meets with, into it. No, I
“will not allow it.”

“Nay,” said Pris, “this is his first
“transgression, if you think it such; I con-
“fess I am of another way of thinking: but
“I will pay all this expence myself, and
“then there can be no fault found with
“him.”

“No, no,” said Patience, “I did not
“mean that; but you should teach the boy
“not

“not to be so fond of throwing away his
 “money upon you know not whom, or
 “what: you should not let him have any,
 “and then he will know the want and the
 “value of it. And there’s this Mr. Brewer,
 “he is a queer sort of a man, and as bad as
 “Frank, I believe; for he did not correct
 “the boy, as he ought to have done, for
 “giving away his shoes, and playing such
 “tricks: but I will speak to him to reprimand him; for if he goes on in this
 “way he will be a beggar, and all his fortune will be given among people in the
 “highway.”

“There was ’Squire Thickset that lived
 “by us, sister,” adds Prue; “he was a
 “man of near three thousand a year, and
 “yet there were no poor people or sick men,
 “or beggars in his house, or about it; no;
 “and the servants were turned away, if ever
 “they gave any thing to them; and the
 “great dog knew a beggar as well as could
 “be, and if they came near the house,
 “always flew at them; yet I do not see that
 “the ’Squire was a bit the worse liked, and
 “I am sure he was very rich; therefore,
 “sister, this boy, who is a young fool,

“should be better instructed; and Mr. Bre-
“wer should teach him to despise those
“people. — Now if he had bought any va-
“luable thing with the money, I should not
“have cared: but he might as well have
“thrown it into the river.”

Pris defended the boy as long as she could, and urged every motive, human and divine: but nothing could convince her sisters.

“To be sure,” said one, “if a relation
“was sick, one should attend them.”

“The parsons,” said the other, “tho’
“they preach so much about charity and
“good works, seldom practise ’em: and all
“these notions ought to be whipped out of
“Frank: and as Mr. Brewer is a very good
“man, I hope he will not *spoil the child*
“*and spare the rod*; I am sure he is a sen-
“sible man, for he praised my cordial very
“much.”

And here we cannot help saying, that though the wisdom of Solomon is very conspicuous in the above quoted maxim, yet there

there never was one that has been more twisted and perverted from its original intention, to the great discomfiture of many a poor child's posteriors, than this very one. Vices which children imbibe from the mistaken indulgence of their parents, and for which, in their tenderest years, they are even applauded, as soon as they grow up, these become too notorious to be passed over; and the pedagogue has recourse to birch, to allay the evil spirit that was originally raised by the parent. Upon these occasions, there should be a law enacted, that, upon sufficient proof of the child's bad behaviour and proneness to vice, and that it was caused and occasioned by a foolishly fond father, or a mother that will see no fault in her own children, and their having aided, abetted, and comforted them in the commission of those misdemeanours, then proper punishment should be inflicted upon them, and the child weaned from those bad habits with the greatest care. At present, the tutors mistake the offenders, and literally visit the sins of the fathers upon their children. Pris could not coincide with her sisters, and they all went to bed.

It is time now to return to Brewer and Frank, who were puzzling themselves to find out the cottage: at last they succeeded. The joy, which was visible in all their faces, the sick man's not excepted, convinced Brewer that every thing Frank had said was true, "He is a little angel," said the afflicted wife.

"Ah! indeed," replied Frank, "my aunt has given me no more money, or you should have it."

"I do not want it," said she.

Brewer began to make enquiries concerning her situation; and recommending it to her husband to keep up his spirits, left a guinea with him, and departed. They arrived at the aunt's house before the family was up; and while they were asking questions concerning Frank's patient, the surgeon came to visit him. He had a good night, was wonderfully recovered, and complained of nothing more than the pain and foreness of his head. That was in a fair way of healing; and in a dressing or two more he was able to remove himself; but he made many apo-

apologies to the ladies, and lamented, in so polite a manner, the trouble he had occasioned, that they repented not of their civilities to him. He informed them he was the son of a clergyman who had a living in a distant part of England; that he was of the university of Oxford, and was also intended for orders; but coming to London on a party of pleasure with some of his friends, unknown to his father, he was induced to drink more than he ought, and this catastrophe was the consequence of it. He reproached himself for his intemperance, as it caused them so much trouble and inconvenience, and observed, the accident he had met with, was but a just punishment for his offence. To his benefactor, little Frank, he was very profuse and earnest in his professions of eternal gratitude, and vows of friendship; and told him, that he should ever find him devoted to his service. He departed with reluctance from his young friend, when the surgeon told him he might travel with safety; and promised to write to him. When he arrived at Oxford, they received a letter from Mr. Harrison, again repeating his acknowledgements.

C H A P T E R XI.

The history of BREWER.

THE fondness that Brewer had for Frank, gave his aunt no room to imagine that he would refuse the care of her nephew; and in this she was not deceived; for when she asked him his opinion of the boy, he declared him superior to his hopes and wishes, and that he was willing to do him every service in his power. Pris then told him what Franks paternal estate was, and how situated; and that she was determined to expend it principally in his education; therefore she insisted on his acceptance of one hundred and fifty pounds a year, to support his extraordinary expences, and twenty pounds a year she intended to allow Frank for his own pocket, and the remaining fifty pounds she supposed would find him in cloaths. This was her scheme, and no alteration in it would she admit of. Brewer was obliged to acquiesce, and Frank was consigned to his care. While he is making study a diversion and amusement, rather than a toil to his pupil, whose capacity was equal to any task,
it

it is necessary to inform the reader of some particulars concerning him, which it is to be supposed he is desirous to know.

Brewer was the son of a gentleman who had originally a good fortune, but by extravagance reduced it to a fourth of its amount. "It is happy enough," says Shenstone, "that the same vices which impair one's fortune, frequently ruin our constitution, that the one may not survive the other." This was the case with this gentleman; who, when he found himself obliged to live on three hundred pounds a year, hardly wished to enjoy any more, at least he was incapable of doing it. By the time his only son was prepared to go to the university, he died, and left him the remains of his shattered fortune. Young Brewer went through the academical course with great *eclat*. Though his acquired talents created admiration and respect, yet, in the opinion of his fellow students, his notions of things in life, were very narrow and confined; and he was rather ridiculous in his manners. He preferred relieving the distresses of a stranger, to spending his money in a party of pleasure. He had been known to have supported a widow who

who had a sweet pretty daughter, and with whom he was on the greatest footing of intimacy, without debauching the girl. These actions, and some foolish vindications of the characters of women whom he was a stranger to, but whom general fame spoke well of, in contradiction to the boasts of some of his companions, gained him the title of being a damn'd fool; but, at the same time, it was allowed, that he was a very sensible fellow. Brewer, when of age and in possession of his little fortune, found not the least inclination to enter into any profession: whether it was, that he had expectations from a nobleman who was educated in the same college with him, and who promised to procure him a place, that should be a sinecure, and leave him at liberty to pursue his inclination, which led him to the study of the *Belle Lettres*; or from what other cause we know not, but he refused to attach himself to any particular profession, though his friends often teased him about it. At last, his noble friend performed his promise, and obtained a place of about three hundred pounds a year for him. This gave him ease, and he was independent; but though his expences were small, yet the benevolence of
of

of his heart and his humanity, prevented his laying by much of his income: and indeed his philanthropy, which never suffered him to distinguish between objects in distress, often led him to bestow his money upon those who were very little deserving of it; but he frequently used to observe, that he had rather be mistaken in his desire to relieve nine undeserving persons, so that he really contributed to the peace or happiness of the tenth, who truly deserved it: he could not help being imposed on, and it was in their own bosoms whether they misrepresented matters or not. He lived for near five years in a state of celibacy, happy and disengaged from any particular object: but the hour was approaching, in which he was doomed to experience more unhappiness than ever he had known.

As he delighted much in walking, and was very active, he frequently, when his leisure permitted, took long walks into the country: in one of these, about twenty miles from London, he was overtaken by a violent storm: he perceived it coming, and, seeing no shelter near him, ran over the common where he was, to a little and the only house he

he could observe all round. The door was opened to him in the most hospitable manner; and the good lady of the mansion, who had passed the meridian of her life, assisted in drying and relieving him thoroughly wetted as he was, it required some time, and a large fire, to restore him to his former state: that was not wanting; and a cordial which she gave him kept the wet from penetrating. When he was properly dried and refreshed, he was preparing to take his leave, not without returning her many thanks, and making a proper acknowledgement to the maid-servant who had assisted him! but Mrs. Alton insisted upon his staying to tea with her and her daughter. He suffered himself to be prevailed upon, and Miss Alton was called down stairs to preside at the tea-table. The first sight of her struck poor Brewer so, that he could hardly stammer out his compliment to her. Her shape was exquisitely fine; her face was good; and, though not a regular beauty, she might, with great propriety and justice, be called handsome. But the neatness of her dress, and the modesty of her deportment, charmed him more than any thing else. As he entered into conversation with her, he perceived a delicacy that

that completed the conquest. Brewer, though he had never been in such a situation before, knew immediately the cause of it; and determined to marry her, if she should turn out as agreeable to him upon proper enquiries, as she was at first sight. Mrs. Alton and he maintained the conversation principally; nevertheless, he seized frequent opportunities of addressing himself to the young lady, and took a pride in giving her an opportunity to explain her sentiments. — Mrs. Alton could not help observing the great effect her daughter's charms had on the stranger; and as his demeanour and language spoke him a gentleman, she did not discourage it: he gave an hint, *en passant*, of his having a place, and this was attended to with much pleasure by the mother: and when, in going away, he asked permission to visit her again, she told him she should always be glad to see him, and expressed a wish that he would return soon. This invitation was by no means unwelcome to Brewer: he promised to take the speediest opportunity of calling on them, and was as good as his word. Mrs. Alton and her daughter expressed great pleasure at seeing him. He went there often, and was always well received. In the course of his visits

visits he learned, that Mrs. Alton was the widow of an officer, and upon her pension, a small allowance from her friends, and the profits arising from the sale of her daughter's work, she supported herself with decency: that they saw little company, as they could not afford it, and it would take up the daughter's time too much. Brewer, who saw the great regularity and neatness with which every thing was conducted, and the frugality and œconomy of the house, thought, if the lady would consent, that he could not make a better choice; concluding, her education would make amends for her want of fortune, and save him one by her management in domestic affairs. He therefore explain'd himself to the mother, and inform'd her of his situation in life; and concluded with asking her permission to address her daughter. Mrs. Alton had no objection, but their being as yet entire strangers to each other. This was soon obviated, for Brewer became a frequent visitor. The young lady though reserv'd, shew'd,

She wou'd be woo'd, and not unfought be won;

And, in a proper time, she listened with
patience to his vows, and in a twelvemonth
con-

consented to become Mrs. Brewer. He accordingly furnished an house for his bride, and brought her and her mother home with him.

For three years he lived as happily as man could wish; and, in that time, his wife presented him with a fine boy and girl. His fondness increased for the amiable mother of those children, who seemed to be only pledges of their mutual affection. He lived with a genteel frugality; and Mrs. Alton, by his wife's desire, inspected the household concerns. The first interruption to the peace he had so long enjoyed, was the death of the old lady. He lamented her sincerely, for she was a worthy woman. Time convinced him, that he had more occasion to grieve for her than he imagined. His wife began to be more engaged abroad than formerly: his affairs at home were not managed so prudently as heretofore; and he perceived a change that was far from being pleasing to him: however, he was silent. Mrs. Brewer entered into parties at play; and being young and unskilful, was always a loser. Her demands for money to pay the debts she had contracted, became very frequent.

G

quent. Brewer, who loved her to distraction, never reproached her: he was contented with talking at her before a friend, and shewed how easily she might be imposed upon. The death of her two children did not prevent her continuing the same course: money must be had, and Brewer found himself involved in debt, before he knew where he was. Even then he could only bring himself to hint at the impropriety of her conduct. She was resolved not to take hints; and with unceasing perseverance and obstinacy, pursued the bent of her inclinations. Brewer had been deceived by that appearance of mildness, good humour, and regularity, which she seemed possessed of, and in the practice of which she was forced to continue while her mother was living; but now she threw off the mask, and appeared in her proper character, froward, haughty, and extravagant; she was no longer the tender wife of an affectionate husband: nor could all Brewer's blandishments or fondness make her return to the path she had quitted. Embarrassed in his affairs by her misconduct, and unhappy at home, he sought refuge abroad. It was lighting the candle at both ends, and his substance was consumed insensibly.

sibly. As yet he believed his honour safe, and, though imprudent as his wife was, he did not imagine her criminal. But in this he was deceived: for a young fellow, whom she had hired as a footman, had invaded his master's bed, though not without her invitation; and this commerce was so public, that the other servants were well acquainted with it, and their regard for their master only prevented their informing him of it; for he was beloved in a high degree by them all. Accident at last revealed the fatal secret, and betrayed the infamous intimacy that subsisted between them. The grief and anguish that seized his heart were inexpressible. He could not vent his pain; it preyed upon his spirits, and threw him into a fever that had nearly cost him his life. He had not, however, the mortification of seeing her frequently about him. He had servants enough, she thought, to attend him, and she left them to do their duty. The goodness of his constitution got the better of his disorder, and he recovered. His greatest concern, when he found his health re-established, was, how he should part with his wife, with whom he determined never more to cohabit. The first thing he did was, to sell part of his

estate to pay off his creditors. The next, unable to bear the reproaches and sneers of the world, which are, unjustly, in such cases as these, bestowed on the injured party, he resolved to leave the town; and, in consequence of that determination, he went and resigned his place into the hands of his noble patron. He had now but little left; not above one hundred and forty pounds a year. His wife still remained. He had as yet never spoke to her; and though he had full evidence of her being guilty of a breach of her matrimonial contract, yet, being unwilling to expose himself to the world, he forbore to sue for a divorce. He came into her dressing-room one morning, and, sitting down by her, desired she might dismiss her attendant; as he had matters of the most private and important nature to communicate to her. He had never addressed her so seriously before, nor had she ever seen such a sternness either in his speech or manner. She dreaded the interview; and, with a faltering voice, bade her maid retire. Her conscience warned her of the approaching storm. "Mrs. Brewer," said he, "we have lived together now somewhat above eight years, great part of which time I have passed in happiness and peace.

“peace. That is now all over: you have
“destroyed it all. Nay, listen to me pa-
“tiently” [she was beginning to speak] “for
“I will be heard. Your extravagance, and
“fondness for play, where you were always
“a dupe, led you into such excesses as have
“ruined me. To pay the debts which you
“were the means of my contracting, I have
“sold one hundred and sixty pounds a year of
“my estate. The last act you have committed,
“and which is more atrocious than any of
“the others, is the criminal correspondence
“you maintain with my servant in my house.
“To avoid being witness to my own shame,
“and to escape from the scorn of the mali-
“cious and ill-natured, I am determined to
“leave London: for that purpose I have re-
“signed my place, and have advertised my
“house and furniture to be sold: therefore
“you know the worst that can happen to you.
“But I will have more compassion on you,
“however undeserving, than to expose you
“in a publick court of justice. We here
“part for ever. I will allow you fifty pounds
“a year for life: and you must sign an agree-
“ment which I have ordered my lawyer to
“draw up, and which he waits with in my
“study, to know whether you will execute,

“or not. If you do not, I must proceed to
“be divorced from you. This I would wish
“to avoid, if possible. I give you fifteen
“minutes to consider of this: you are mis-
“tress of all those trinkets my foolish fond-
“ness lavished on you in the days of my
“affection, and your innocence: they are
“both past now; and all the comfort I have
“under these misfortunes is, that I have no
“child to be a witness of a mother’s shame,
“and a father’s grief.” She fell on her knees
before him as he ceased speaking. Tears
and sobs choaked her utterance. At last she
found vent for words. In the most suppli-
cating terms she besought him to restore her
to the place she formerly held in his heart;
confessed her crime, and her abhorrence of
it; assured him that she would live in a cot-
tage with him. He interrupted her, “Ma-
“dam, it must not be. My resolution, my
“unalterable resolution is taken; I will ne-
“ver recede: and you are only wasting that
“time in unavailing and ineffectual entreaties,
“that should be employed in considering
“what course you should take.”

“That is already fixed,” said she.—
“Much obliged as I have been to you, I will
still

“ still be more indebted to your goodness.
“ Order the lawyer to come in, I will exe-
“cute any agreement you please to make.
“ The worst would be too good for me.”

She consented to a separation, and he did as he promised her. He sold his house and furniture, except a few articles which he kept to furnish the little house where he then lived, and which had been in his possession above four years. As his grief was not so violent as to expend itself in the first discovery of his unhappiness, it had a worse effect; and he remained in a state of dejection and melancholy for a long time. His books were his only companions: and he wished, if possible, to detach himself from a world which he hated. At length his sorrow began to abate, and he ventured by degrees into that society he had so long quitted; but he prescribed himself certain bounds, beyond which he never went. At this time he was introduced to our reader: and this was the man to whom Frank was committed for his education.

CHAPTER XII.

*The quick lapse of time. Continuation of
WILLS's history.*

WHILE our reader is amusing himself with the history of Brewer, we shall take it as a great favour if he will imagine eight years are elapsed while he was reading it. And in this we differ not from our fellow biographers, who frequently skip over that space of time without making any sort of apology for it: but modesty would not suffer us to adopt such a practice. And in that time, if he pleases, he may divert himself with imagining how many hours a day Wills spend in reading Greek and Latin; how many in astronomy and mathematics; and so may go on with the whole course. All we shall say about the matter is, that he took as much pleasure in learning, as Brewer did in teaching him; and his aunt was so sensible of the benefits her nephew had received from him, that she could not make acknowledgements enough. And in this time it is necessary to inform the reader, who should be acquainted with every particular relating to

to the family, that the eldest sister of the three paid the tribute to nature, and left all her fortune between her two remaining sisters. Frank, as he grew up; lost none of his comeliness; and as he approached manhood, being now near nineteen, his shape had apparently and really strength and beauty united in it. Brewer, who was active himself through temperance and exercise, always encouraged Wills in feats of agility. Not a young man on the common where he lived could out-run him; none leaped so far; and few could pitch a bar beyond him. Brewer was his companion in all these exercises: and if he loved Frank with all the affection of the parent, Wills felt as much love for him as his child could; it was gratitude in the youth. "To you," he would say, "I am indebted for that knowledge which enables me to hold an honourable rank in the creation: that teaches me to pity honest ignorance, and despise foolish presumption: that gives me power to distinguish between good and evil, and to chuse that which is right."

"But," said Brewer, "your knowledge is yet confined in a small compass: it is

“not in the study of books you will get
“that knowledge which will be most useful
“to you hereafter; it is in the world you
“must learn what the world is; and from
“men themselves, you must study men. Let
“us quit this sedentary life now, and go
“abroad. We will take a tour, and in
“it receive a practical lesson. We will
“visit some part of England. You are
“young, and I am healthy: we will not be
“confined in a carriage, but make use of
“our legs; we shall enjoy our own time,
“and be enabled to make our observations
“more at leisure. We will go into the coun-
“try first; for there you will see nature less
“disguised than in the city, where it will be
“difficult for you to unravel, at once, the
“almost inextricable clue of villany. You
“will see the same schemes put in practice,
“though not in so great a degree. Hypo-
“crisy, ambition, and pride, are as much
“exercised in a country village, as in a
“court; though with infinitely less dange-
“rous effects. But we shall receive a great-
“er benefit; we shall be able to inspect the
“different manufactories in the towns we
“shall pass through; and, as you will no
“doubt hereafter be in possession of the for-
tune

“tune of your family, you will seek a place
 “in the senate, then the knowledge you may
 “acquire in this little journey will be of
 “more service to you and your constituents,
 “than half a dozen tours to Italy or France.
 “What can be more absurd, than to suppose
 “a man talking of regulating our woollen
 “manufactory, who never saw any prepa-
 “ration for making a piece of cloth, or who
 “perhaps never wears any thing but French
 “silks? Yet such are some of our legislators;
 “nor could all the clothiers in England make
 “them understand how a piece of cloth is
 “made, if they do not see it themselves.
 “Not that I would insinuate, that it is requi-
 “site that you should be an artificer: it is
 “sufficient that you should be acquainted
 “with the method of doing it; and you will
 “find hereafter that the most trifling piece of
 “knowledge you may pick up by chance,
 “may, at some time or other, prove of the
 “greatest utility.”

Frank heard and approved the scheme:
 and the next day they set out. The first
 knowledge a man should acquire who tra-
 vels, is that of his own country: but as
 he can see that every day, and with very
 little

little trouble, it is not worth looking at: and it is not to be doubted, that a tour through England, with a sensible man, would be of more service to our countrymen, than gallopping through Europe under the tuition of a Swiss bear-leader, and all that they can say of themselves, when they return, is, that

“Europe they saw, and Europe saw them too!”

It was in the course of these perambulations that Brewer communicated his history to his dear Frank, who sympathized with him in all his sorrows. — As their design was to improve themselves, they made no great haste; but staid to inform themselves of every thing worthy notice. The adventures they met with in their walks, are not sufficiently interesting to obtain a place here. Suffice it to say, that they went through the greatest part of England in this manner, and learned every thing that was worthy the inspection of the curious; and near two years were taken up in these periodical journeys. Frank now approached his one-and-twentieth year; and the next tour the friends proposed taking, was through the metropolis: and previous to
this

this undertaking, Brewer had fortified the mind of his pupil with the most wholesome advice. But as they were preparing to put their scheme in execution, Brewer was suddenly taken ill. It generally happens that a strong, hale man seldom recovers from a violent illness, that a Valetudinarian thinks nothing of. The willow, bending to the storm, escapes its fury; while the oak, that opposes it, is rent in pieces. So it fared with poor Brewer: for Wills had the inexpressible anguish to see him expire in his arms on the third day after he was taken ill. He had attended him from the moment he sickened; nor could he be persuaded to leave him. He hardly left his cold remains till he saw them interred; and after pouring forth the tear of gratitude and affection on his grave, he returned to his aunt's, in a state of dejection, that would have excited pity from the most obdurate heart.

CHAPTER XI.

The history of BREWER.

THE fondness that Brewer had for Frank, gave his aunt no room to imagine that he would refuse the care of her nephew; and in this she was not deceived; for when she asked him his opinion of the boy, he declared him superior to his hopes and wishes, and that he was willing to do him every service in his power. Pris then told him what Franks paternal estate was, and how situated; and that she was determined to expend it principally in his education; therefore she insisted on his acceptance of one hundred and fifty pounds a year, to support his extraordinary expences, and twenty pounds a year she intended to allow Frank for his own pocket, and the remaining fifty pounds she supposed would find him in cloaths. This was her scheme, and no alteration in it would she admit of. Brewer was obliged to acquiesce, and Frank was consigned to his care. While he is making study a diversion and amusement, rather than a toil to his pupil, whose capacity was equal to any task,
it

it is necessary to inform the reader of some particulars concerning him, which it is to be supposed he is desirous to know.

Brewer was the son of a gentleman who had originally a good fortune, but by extravagance reduced it to a fourth of its amount. "It is happy enough," says Shenstone, "that the same vices which impair one's fortune, frequently ruin our constitution, that the one may not survive the other." This was the case with this gentleman; who, when he found himself obliged to live on three hundred pounds a year, hardly wished to enjoy any more, at least he was incapable of doing it. By the time his only son was prepared to go to the university, he died, and left him the remains of his shattered fortune. Young Brewer went through the academical course with great *eclat*. Though his acquired talents created admiration and respect, yet, in the opinion of his fellow students, his notions of things in life, were very narrow and confined; and he was rather ridiculous in his manners. He preferred relieving the distresses of a stranger, to spending his money in a party of pleasure. He had been known to have supported a widow who

who had a sweet pretty daughter, and with whom he was on the greatest footing of intimacy, without debauching the girl. These actions, and some foolish vindications of the characters of women whom he was a stranger to, but whom general fame spoke well of, in contradiction to the boasts of some of his companions, gained him the title of being a damn'd fool; but, at the same time, it was allowed, that he was a very sensible fellow. Brewer, when of age and in possession of his little fortune, found not the least inclination to enter into any profession: whether it was, that he had expectations from a nobleman who was educated in the same college with him, and who promised to procure him a place, that should be a sinecure, and leave him at liberty to pursue his inclination, which led him to the study of the *Belle Lettres*; or from what other cause we know not, but he refused to attach himself to any particular profession, though his friends often teased him about it. At last, his noble friend performed his promise, and obtained a place of about three hundred pounds a year for him. This gave him ease, and he was independent; but though his expences were small, yet the benevolence
of

of his heart and his humanity, prevented his laying by much of his income: and indeed his philanthropy, which never suffered him to distinguish between objects in distress, often led him to bestow his money upon those who were very little deserving of it; but he frequently used to observe, that he had rather be mistaken in his desire to relieve nine undeserving persons, so that he really contributed to the peace or happiness of the tenth, who truly deserved it: he could not help being imposed on, and it was in their own bosoms whether they misrepresented matters or not. He lived for near five years in a state of celibacy, happy and disengaged from any particular object: but the hour was approaching, in which he was doomed to experience more unhappiness than ever he had known.

As he delighted much in walking, and was very active, he frequently, when his leisure permitted, took long walks into the country: in one of these, about twenty miles from London, he was overtaken by a violent storm: he perceived it coming, and, seeing no shelter near him, ran over the common where he was, to a little and the only house he

he could observe all round. The door was opened to him in the most hospitable manner; and the good lady of the mansion, who had passed the meridian of her life, assisted in drying and relieving him thoroughly wetted as he was, it required some time, and a large fire, to restore him to his former state: that was not wanting; and a cordial which she gave him kept the wet from penetrating. When he was properly dried and refreshed, he was preparing to take his leave, not without returning her many thanks, and making a proper acknowledgement to the maid-servant who had assisted him! but Mrs. Alton insisted upon his staying to tea with her and her daughter. He suffered himself to be prevailed upon, and Miss Alton was called down stairs to preside at the tea-table. The first sight of her struck poor Brewer so, that he could hardly stammer out his compliment to her. Her shape was exquisitely fine; her face was good; and, though not a regular beauty, she might, with great propriety and justice, be called handsome. But the neatness of her dress, and the modesty of her deportment, charmed him more than any thing else. As he entered into conversation with her, he perceived a delicacy that

that completed the conquest. Brewer, though he had never been in such a situation before, knew immediately the cause of it; and determined to marry her, if she should turn out as agreeable to him upon proper enquiries, as she was at first sight. Mrs. Alton and he maintained the conversation principally; nevertheless, he seized frequent opportunities of addressing himself to the young lady, and took a pride in giving her an opportunity to explain her sentiments. — Mrs. Alton could not help observing the great effect her daughter's charms had on the stranger; and as his demeanour and language spoke him a gentleman, she did not discourage it: he gave an hint, *en passant*, of his having a place, and this was attended to with much pleasure by the mother: and when, in going away, he asked permission to visit her again, she told him she should always be glad to see him, and expressed a wish that he would return soon. This invitation was by no means unwelcome to Brewer: he promised to take the speediest opportunity of calling on them, and was as good as his word. Mrs. Alton and her daughter expressed great pleasure at seeing him. He went there often, and was always well received. In the course of his visits

visits he learned, that Mrs. Alton was the widow of an officer, and upon her pension, a small allowance from her friends, and the profits arising from the sale of her daughter's work, she supported herself with decency: that they saw little company, as they could not afford it, and it would take up the daughter's time too much. Brewer, who saw the great regularity and neatness with which every thing was conducted, and the frugality and œconomy of the house, thought, if the lady would consent, that he could not make a better choice; concluding, her education would make amends for her want of fortune, and save him one by her management in domestic affairs. He therefore explain'd himself to the mother, and inform'd her of his situation in life; and concluded with asking her permission to address her daughter. Mrs. Alton had no objection, but their being as yet entire strangers to each other. This was soon obviated, for Brewer became a frequent visitor. The young lady though reserv'd, shew'd,

She wou'd be woo'd, and not unfought be won;

And, in a proper time, she listened with
patience to his vows, and in a twelvemonth
con-

consented to become Mrs. Brewer. He accordingly furnished an house for his bride, and brought her and her mother home with him.

For three years he lived as happily as man could wish; and, in that time, his wife presented him with a fine boy and girl. His fondness increased for the amiable mother of those children, who seemed to be only pledges of their mutual affection. He lived with a genteel frugality; and Mrs. Alton, by his wife's desire, inspected the household concerns. The first interruption to the peace he had so long enjoyed, was the death of the old lady. He lamented her sincerely, for she was a worthy woman. Time convinced him, that he had more occasion to grieve for her than he imagined. His wife began to be more engaged abroad than formerly: his affairs at home were not managed so prudently as heretofore; and he perceived a change that was far from being pleasing to him: however, he was silent. Mrs. Brewer entered into parties at play; and being young and unskilful, was always a loser. Her demands for money to pay the debts she had contracted, became very frequent.

G

quent. Brewer, who loved her to distraction, never reproached her: he was contented with talking at her before a friend, and shewed how easily she might be imposed upon. The death of her two children did not prevent her continuing the same course: money must be had, and Brewer found himself involved in debt, before he knew where he was. Even then he could only bring himself to hint at the impropriety of her conduct. She was resolved not to take hints; and with unceasing perseverance and obstinacy, pursued the bent of her inclinations. Brewer had been deceived by that appearance of mildness, good humour, and regularity, which she seemed possessed of, and in the practice of which she was forced to continue while her mother was living; but now she threw off the mask, and appeared in her proper character, froward, haughty, and extravagant; she was no longer the tender wife of an affectionate husband: nor could all Brewer's blandishments or fondness make her return to the path she had quitted. Embarrassed in his affairs by her misconduct, and unhappy at home, he sought refuge abroad. It was lighting the candle at both ends, and his substance was consumed insensibly.

sibly. As yet he believed his honour safe, and, though imprudent as his wife was, he did not imagine her criminal. But in this he was deceived: for a young fellow, whom she had hired as a footman, had invaded his master's bed, though not without her invitation; and this commerce was so public, that the other servants were well acquainted with it, and their regard for their master only prevented their informing him of it; for he was beloved in a high degree by them all. Accident at last revealed the fatal secret, and betrayed the infamous intimacy that subsisted between them. The grief and anguish that seized his heart were inexpressible. He could not vent his pain; it preyed upon his spirits, and threw him into a fever that had nearly cost him his life. He had not, however, the mortification of seeing her frequently about him. He had servants enough, she thought, to attend him, and she left them to do their duty. The goodness of his constitution got the better of his disorder, and he recovered. His greatest concern, when he found his health re-established, was, how he should part with his wife, with whom he determined never more to cohabit. The first thing he did was, to sell part of his

estate to pay off his creditors. The next, unable to bear the reproaches and sneers of the world, which are, unjustly, in such cases as these, bestowed on the injured party, he resolved to leave the town; and, in consequence of that determination, he went and resigned his place into the hands of his noble patron. He had now but little left; not above one hundred and forty pounds a year. His wife still remained. He had as yet never spoke to her; and though he had full evidence of her being guilty of a breach of her matrimonial contract, yet, being unwilling to expose himself to the world, he forbore to sue for a divorce. He came into her dressing-room one morning, and, sitting down by her, desired she might dismiss her attendant; as he had matters of the most private and important nature to communicate to her. He had never addressed her so seriously before, nor had she ever seen such a sternness either in his speech or manner. She dreaded the interview; and, with a faltering voice, bade her maid retire. Her conscience warned her of the approaching storm. "Mrs. Brewer," said he, "we have lived together now somewhat above eight years, great part of which time I have passed in happiness and peace.

“peace. That is now all over: you have
“destroyed it all. Nay, listen to me pa-
“tiently” [she was beginning to speak] “for
“I will be heard. Your extravagance, and
“fondness for play, where you were always
“a dupe, led you into such excesses as have
“ruined me. To pay the debts which you
“were the means of my contracting, I have
“sold one hundred and sixty pounds a year of
“my estate. The last act you have committed,
“and which is more atrocious than any of
“the others, is the criminal correspondence
“you maintain with my servant in my house.
“To avoid being witness to my own shame,
“and to escape from the scorn of the mali-
“cious and ill-natured, I am determined to
“leave London: for that purpose I have re-
“signed my place, and have advertised my
“house and furniture to be sold: therefore
“you know the worst that can happen to you.
“But I will have more compassion on you,
“however undeserving, than to expose you
“in a publick court of justice. We here
“part for ever. I will allow you fifty pounds
“a year for life: and you must sign an agree-
“ment which I have ordered my lawyer to
“draw up, and which he waits with in my
“study, to know whether you will execute,

“or not. If you do not, I must proceed to
“be divorced from you. This I would wish
“to avoid, if possible. I give you fifteen
“minutes to consider of this: you are mis-
“tress of all those trinkets my foolish fond-
“ness lavished on you in the days of my
“affection, and your innocence: they are
“both past now; and all the comfort I have
“under these misfortunes is, that I have no
“child to be a witness of a mother’s shame,
“and a father’s grief.” She fell on her knees
before him as he ceased speaking. Tears
and sobs choaked her utterance. At last she
found vent for words. In the most suppli-
cating terms she besought him to restore her
to the place she formerly held in his heart;
confessed her crime, and her abhorrence of
it; assured him that she would live in a cot-
tage with him. He interrupted her, “Ma-
“dam, it must not be. My resolution, my
“unalterable resolution is taken; I will ne-
“ver recede: and you are only wasting that
“time in unavailing and ineffectual entreaties,
“that should be employed in considering
“what course you should take.”

“That is already fixed,” said she.—
“Much obliged as I have been to you, I will
still

“ still be more indebted to your goodness.
“ Order the lawyer to come in, I will exe-
“ cute any agreement you please to make.
“ The worst would be too good for me.”

She consented to a separation, and he did as he promised her. He sold his house and furniture, except a few articles which he kept to furnish the little house where he then lived, and which had been in his possession above four years. As his grief was not so violent as to expend itself in the first discovery of his unhappiness, it had a worse effect; and he remained in a state of dejection and melancholy for a long time. His books were his only companions: and he wished, if possible, to detach himself from a world which he hated. At length his sorrow began to abate, and he ventured by degrees into that society he had so long quitted; but he prescribed himself certain bounds, beyond which he never went. At this time he was introduced to our reader: and this was the man to whom Frank was committed for his education.

CHAPTER XII.

*The quick lapse of time. Continuation of
WILLS's history.*

WHILE our reader is amusing himself with the history of Brewer, we shall take it as a great favour if he will imagine eight years are elapsed while he was reading it. And in this we differ not from our fellow biographers, who frequently skip over that space of time without making any sort of apology for it: but modesty would not suffer us to adopt such a practice. And in that time, if he pleases, he may divert himself with imagining how many hours a day Wills spend in reading Greek and Latin; how many in astronomy and mathematics; and so may go on with the whole course. All we shall say about the matter is, that he took as much pleasure in learning, as Brewer did in teaching him; and his aunt was so sensible of the benefits her nephew had received from him, that she could not make acknowledgements enough. And in this time it is necessary to inform the reader, who should be acquainted with every particular relating to

to the family, that the eldest sister of the three paid the tribute to nature, and left all her fortune between her two remaining sisters. Frank, as he grew up; lost none of his comeliness; and as he approached manhood, being now near nineteen, his shape had apparently and really strength and beauty united in it. Brewer, who was active himself through temperance and exercise, always encouraged Wills in feats of agility. Not a young man on the common where he lived could out-run him; none leaped so far; and few could pitch a bar beyond him. Brewer was his companion in all these exercises: and if he loved Frank with all the affection of the parent, Wills felt as much love for him as his child could; it was gratitude in the youth. "To you," he would say, "I am indebted for that knowledge which enables me to hold an honourable rank in the creation: that teaches me to pity honest ignorance, and despise foolish presumption: that gives me power to distinguish between good and evil, and to chuse that which is right."

"But," said Brewer, "your knowledge is yet confined in a small compass: it is

“not in the study of books you will get
“that knowledge which will be most useful
“to you hereafter; it is in the world you
“must learn what the world is; and from
“men themselves, you must study men. Let
“us quit this sedentary life now, and go
“abroad. We will take a tour, and in
“it receive a practical lesson. We will
“visit some part of England. You are
“young, and I am healthy: we will not be
“confined in a carriage, but make use of
“our legs; we shall enjoy our own time,
“and be enabled to make our observations
“more at leisure. We will go into the coun-
“try first; for there you will see nature less
“disguised than in the city, where it will be
“difficult for you to unravel, at once, the
“almost inextricable clue of villany. You
“will see the same schemes put in practice,
“though not in so great a degree. Hypo-
“crisy, ambition, and pride, are as much
“exercised in a country village, as in a
“court; though with infinitely less dange-
“rous effects. But we shall receive a great-
“er benefit; we shall be able to inspect the
“different manufactories in the towns we
“shall pass through; and, as you will no
“doubt hereafter be in possession of the for-
tune

“tune of your family, you will seek a place
“in the senate, then the knowledge you may
“acquire in this little journey will be of
“more service to you and your constituents,
“than half a dozen tours to Italy or France.
“What can be more absurd, than to suppose
“a man talking of regulating our woollen
“manufactory, who never saw any prepa-
“ration for making a piece of cloth, or who
“perhaps never wears any thing but French
“silks? Yet such are some of our legislators;
“nor could all the clothiers in England make
“them understand how a piece of cloth is
“made, if they do not see it themselves.
“Not that I would insinuate, that it is requi-
“site that you should be an artificer: it is
“sufficient that you should be acquainted
“with the method of doing it; and you will
“find hereafter that the most trifling piece of
“knowledge you may pick up by chance,
“may, at some time or other, prove of the
“greatest utility.”

Frank heard and approved the scheme:
and the next day they set out. The first
knowledge a man should acquire who tra-
vels, is that of his own country: but as
he can see that every day, and with very
little

little trouble, it is not worth looking at: and it is not to be doubted, that a tour through England, with a sensible man, would be of more service to our countrymen, than gallopping through Europe under the tuition of a Swiss bear-leader, and all that they can say of themselves, when they return, is, that

“Europe they saw, and Europe saw them too!”

It was in the course of these perambulations that Brewer communicated his history to his dear Frank, who sympathized with him in all his sorrows. — As their design was to improve themselves, they made no great haste; but staid to inform themselves of every thing worthy notice. The adventures they met with in their walks, are not sufficiently interesting to obtain a place here. Suffice it to say, that they went through the greatest part of England in this manner, and learned every thing that was worthy the inspection of the curious; and near two years were taken up in these periodical journeys. Frank now approached his one-and-twentieth year; and the next tour the friends proposed taking, was through the metropolis: and previous to
this

this undertaking, Brewer had fortified the mind of his pupil with the most wholesome advice. But as they were preparing to put their scheme in execution, Brewer was suddenly taken ill. It generally happens that a strong, hale man seldom recovers from a violent illness, that a Valetudinarian thinks nothing of. The willow, bending to the storm, escapes its fury; while the oak, that opposes it, is rent in pieces. So it fared with poor Brewer: for Wills had the inexpressible anguish to see him expire in his arms on the third day after he was taken ill. He had attended him from the moment he sickened; nor could he be persuaded to leave him. He hardly left his cold remains till he saw them interred; and after pouring forth the tear of gratitude and affection on his grave, he returned to his aunt's, in a state of dejection, that would have excited pity from the most obdurate heart.

C H A P T E R XIII.

WILLS consoled. Another death. A change in the family.

AS this was the first misfortune in life that Wills had really felt the force of, he was the more susceptible of its weight: it hung heavy on his mind, unaccustomed to bear the load of misery. Grievous was the loss to him, and bitterly he lamented it. Nor did he omit, for a long time, visiting the place of his friend's interment, and sighing at the remembrance of his loss. His grief at last began to abate; and the preparations for his birthday, when he was to quit his minority, served to amuse him. On that day he first forsook the mourning habit he had assumed for his friend. In the morning his aunt Pris called him into her closet. "My dear Frank," said she, embracing him, "this I shall esteem one of the happiest days in my life, that has afforded me the pleasure of seeing you arrived at man's estate, and so worthy of my affection as you are. But though, through the mistaken avarice of
of

“of your grandfather, and the misfortune
 “of your father, they have left you no-
 “thing but a name; yet I am very much
 “rejoiced to think, through my means, you
 “may be restored to the inheritance of
 “your fathers. Here, Frank,” added she,
 “here are the deeds of your paternal esta-
 “te: it will support you till something bet-
 “ter is provided for you, and may you
 “live long and happily to enjoy it. But
 “do not imagine that I mean to send you
 “away from this house; no, it shall be
 “always yours.”

“I should have interrupted you before
 “now, Madam, if my surprize and grati-
 “tude had permitted me. Obligated as I have
 “been to you since the hour of my birth,
 “as I may say, this last act of generosity,
 “tho’ it corresponds with your former beha-
 “viour, has exceeded my hopes: but you,
 “by rendering me independent, have only
 “attached my heart to you by closer ties;
 “and may the hour that I cease to honour
 “and revere you be the last of my life.”

“No acknowledgements or thanks, Frank;
 “I want none. — I am convinced of your
 gra-

“gratitude, and am assured of your love.
“Enough of that. I have invited many
“friends here to celebrate your birth-day.
“There will be several girls here. Look
“at them: there may be one among them
“who may have charms sufficient to fix
“your inclinations. I wish to see you
“married and settled, but I wish to see you
“happy: therefore your choice shall be
“free. Only I want you to make a choice.”

Wills promised every thing she required; informing her, at the same time, he never had any passion for a particular woman: yet would examine those ladies she had offered to his election, in order to contribute to her happiness. She commended his obedience, and they parted: she, to prepare herself to assist at this great ceremony; he, to meditate on what had passed. He walked towards the spot where Brewer was buried. His thoughts were fixed on him, and he trod insensibly the accustomed path. He found himself stopped by his grave before he knew where he was. He stood gazing in silence on it for some moments. His hands were folded on his breast; his head hung down, and the tear
suf-

suffused his eye. "Thou should'st have
 "assisted at this ceremony, my poor friend,
 "had'st thou yet lived." He sighed as he
 spoke. "To thee I owe what I am: to
 "thy care, to thy parental fondness I am
 "indebted for almost every blessing. I have
 "got fortune, but know not what to do
 "with it. The man who should have steer-
 "ed my little vessel at its first entrance into
 "the troubled ocean of life, has quitted
 "the helm: but he always taught me the
 "sweet lessons of Benevolence, and strongly
 "inculcated the precepts of Humanity; the-
 "se will I ever follow. To do as he
 "has done, will be acting rightly. They
 "would have me marry too; and be served
 "as thou wert, Brewer, by an ungrate-
 "ful female! No. Thy history remains yet
 "deeply imprinted in my memory. What
 "woman, after thy wife, can be trusted?
 "When neither gratitude, or affection could
 "restrain her libidinous appetites. Farewell,
 "much injured, and by me, much-lamented
 "shade. Fortune may banish me to the most
 "distant parts of the world, but I shall always
 "remember thee." This was the last time
 he visited the grave of Brewer, till he rais-
 ed a handsome marble monument over him.

H

He

He returned home and prepared to dress. This did not take up much time. His garment was plain: but the natural gracefulness and beauty of his person amply compensated for his want of finery. Short a time as he was in dressing himself, yet the greater part of the company was assembled when Wills entered the room. As he had been so closely attached to Brewer and his studies, he had made few acquaintances, and was obliged to undergo the ceremony of being introduced to every body. Among the many requisites necessary to complete the behaviour of a man, Brewer did not forget to have his pupil taught those of dancing and fencing. The young gentleman received and returned the compliments of the company, with the greatest ease, and most natural politeness. The men allowed him accomplished, the women thought him amiable. The guests were numerous. The dinner was elegant; that Pris prided herself in, nearly as much as in her nephew. There is no female composition without a spark of vanity: it will break forth in spite of every thing, and Pris was actuated by it. Among the rest of the dainties, provided on this occasion, was a turtle. Prue was ob-

serv-

served to eat remarkably hearty of it. The greater part of the company were very much pleased, and bestowed many commendations on the excellence of the cookery, and the elegance of the entertainment. Some of the younger ladies did not pay so much attention to the dinner, as the person who occasioned it. Their gentle bosoms felt the sting of envy, and the fears of superiority in each other. Disengaged, and alike indifferent to them all, there was no cause of complaint. His attention and assiduities were so equally divided among them, that none had reason to suppose she was less admired than her neighbour. But this indifference gave way, when Mrs. and Miss Collins came in the afternoon. These ladies had excused themselves from dining, but promised to wait on Miss Kingleys in the evening. Wills, who had never seen any thing so lovely as Miss Collins, involuntarily attached himself to her: he could no longer retain that equality of demeanour, which he resolved in vain to adhere to, or the resolutions he had made at poor Brewer's grave. His eyes told her how much he thought her superior to every body else; and informed her, that though he was obliged to behave

politely to the other ladies, he should be happy were those civilities confined to her alone. Nor was she unworthy of them. A shape, exquisitely fine; a face, that bespoke the most delicate sensibility, fair and blooming; eyes, that sparkled as they rolled; this was Miss Collins. Nor did she behold Wills with an unfavourable aspect. His face, that displayed the bloom of youth, was finely formed; his eyes were large and piercing; the colour in his cheeks, was the consequence of uninterrupted health, and manly exercise: his fine auburn hair shaded his face, and contrasted the whiteness of his skin; it flowed in ringlets in his neck, untortured by irons; nor yet tucked in a bag, dangling in a queue, or twisted in a club. His were

Hyperion's curls: the front of Jove himself.

To this may be added a faultless shape, dressed in that neat and elegant plainness, which indicates no want of fine cloaths, either to conceal defects, or shew beauties to advantage.

As Pris had designed a ball for the young folks in the evening, Wills had
been

been very easy about his partner, till Miss Collins appeared; but then he was casting about how he should contrive to dance with her. He was forced to open the ball, by walking a minuet with a lady whose rank demanded the preference. His dancing was admired; but it was inanimate to that, when he had the happiness of handing Miss Collins out. Every motion, every look, displayed his feelings. His steps were like the gentle breeze of the evening, which glides over the sleeping lake, without ruffling its surface. Actuated by one sentiment, their looks were beauty, and their movements harmony. They were almost universally allowed the handsomest couple in the room: for the young ladies, who had a design upon Wills's heart, could not help finding fault with Miss Collins, who appeared the object of his admiration. Each one found a separate fault in her; and, were they all added together, and all true, she would not have had a perfection left. As there were more ladies than gentlemen, the former were to draw lots for their partners, to prevent any affront which the neglected might conceive, if the men had followed their inclinations in choosing those whom

they liked best, and who, unless they danced together, could not be taken out. While the lots were distributing, Wills whispered a secret prayer to the blind goddess of chance, to be propitious: and, for once, she attended to her votary. His heart throbbed with tumultuous joy, when her fair hand displayed the billet on which his name was written. "How much am I indebted to fortune, Madam," said he, approaching her, "for thus interesting herself in my behalf! but I assure you it was not without my supplications: she has listened to my prayers, and granted them."

"I should also be indebted to her," returned the lady, "for favouring me with so good a partner."

She had not time to say more: he led her in triumph to her place, and began the dance. His agility, his taste in dancing country dances, was as conspicuous as in a minuet. The lovely couple seemed mutually enamoured of each other, and some tender marks of esteem had escaped them both, attended, on the lady's side, with the most delicate reserve. The evening passed

passed away in the greatest harmony; and the guests seemed reciprocally pleased with their entertainment, and each other.

The next day the family was alarmed with an account of Prue's illness. Physicians were sent for, who, shaking their heads, prognosticated evil. Her disorder was occasioned by a surfeit, and the heat of the room where the ball was. She grew gradually worse and worse. It might be that old age, it might be that the faculty, rather assisted the disorder, by surfeiting her a second time with drugs; but, be that as it may, in a weeks time she departed this life, and left her whole fortune to her sister. This accident prevented Wills and his aunt from returning the visits of their friends for some time. Pris was now in possession of all the fortune of old Wills. And she who, with a third part of it, was benevolent, humane and charitable, was now so much altered in her disposition, that she was neither the one nor the other. And this change happened very suddenly: for, as soon as Prue was interred, she made a reform in her household; and began to declaim, with the greatest virulence, against

those very actions in young Wills, which she formerly applauded him for, and assisted him in. Her nephew was utterly at a loss to account for this sudden alteration: but he had too much respect for his aunt to oppose her openly; therefore he pursued the bent of his own inclinations, without her participation or knowledge.

C H A P T E R XIV.

The prospect of a marriage; and how it was obscured.

WILLS was impatient till he could visit Miss Collins. He was obliged to wait for Miss Kingley's going abroad: for, under this title we shall always hereafter distinguish Pris. At length she accompanied him to see Mrs. Collins; and her daughter was not a little pleased to see Wills again. Her mother was by no means averse to his paying his addresses to Charlotte. The prospect he had of succeeding to his aunt's fortune, was a circumstance that forwarded his suit very much, both with the mother and the daughter; consequently, he soon found him-

himself on a very good footing there. Wills had not been there above three times, when he perceived he had got a rival in a Mr. Peterfon, whom he found almost constantly there. As he had no reason to believe he was disagreeable to Miss Collins, he was much surprized at finding Peterfon very easy at his visiting them so frequently. This he could not unravel: but he had not as yet been so particular with Charlotte as he ought to have been, from want of opportunity to acquaint her with the feelings of his heart. The number of slaves, not the worth of them, was what Miss Collins prided herself in; and though she liked Wills better than any man she had ever seen, she could not relinquish her other admirers for his sake. She gave them encouragement, to make them persevere in their attendance, without having any notion of recompensing their passion. To each she accorded little favours, sufficient to keep their hopes alive: each imagined himself the happy man, and took no notice of her behaviour to others; who all had their reasons for supposing themselves likewise in a fair road of being blessed. Miss Collins's fortune did not exceed four thousand pounds; and Wills was the most

advantageous match that had yet offered for her: and, as vanity had taken possession of her heart, there was but little room left for love. Indeed that was not much regarded; and the hopes of enjoying pomp and grandeur in marrying Wills, superseded every other consideration; and, till he appeared, Peterson had been the most favoured of all her train. He was a young man possessed of a good heart and plentiful estate; who, like Wills, had been struck with her figure, and overlooking the want of a fortune suitable to his own, would have married her. He had not all those personal charms to boast of, that Wills had; yet he was far from being disagreeable. In the course of his visits at her house, they became acquainted, and pushed their addresses to the lady in concert. Her choice was to determine their fate: and this could not be otherwise than agreeable to her, who thereby had an opportunity of indulging her pride and inclination at once.

Things had continued in this situation for some time, while Miss Collins still delayed giving a definitive answer; and Miss Kingley still adhered more closely to the frugal

frugal plan she had laid down at her sister's death, when Wills, going home one evening from visiting his mistress, found a gentleman sitting with his aunt, who, by his garb appeared to be an officer, and by his dialect a Scotchman. Another gentleman, whom he knew to be an old acquaintance of his aunt's, was also there, and, as he supposed, the person who had introduced the stranger. After announcing and introducing captain Mac Gregor to Wills, as it was rather early in the evening, a pool of quadrille was proposed, and the captain approving it, the cards were produced, and they prepared to engage. The usual manner in which they had been accustomed to play was, six pence a fish: but to this captain Mac Gregor objected. "It was too extravagant, and he cu'd na afford it: that it was a vara bad way of throwing awa his filler." It was accordingly limited to his stint; and two pence a Fish was the greatest sum he ever played for. Wills observed this stroke of œconomy was highly acceptable to his aunt, and she seemed to smile on the captain very graciously. This had so good an effect on the North Briton, that he displayed his knowledge in the art of
of

of saving, and uttered, with great self-applause, several sentences and adages, recommending the practice of frugality. Miss Kingley seconded these strokes; and Wills sat to be talked at, as he did not confine himself in every particular to those rules which they laid down in concert; he therefore held his tongue: and, as fortune seemed to favour the captain and Miss Kingley, the captain told him, that he “wa’d ha’ lost a muckle deal o’ filler, if he had not regulated the price of the fish.” Wills replied, “that he himself might be more benefited by that regulation at last, as the pool was not out.” His words were prophetic: he soon after played a *sans prendre vole*, to the no small mortification of the captain; and the other gentleman began to be very successful. To people who are very avaricious, a loss at cards, though but trifling, is matter of great concern, and never fails to sour their tempers. Wills and his friend enjoyed that reverse of luck, that gave occasion to the captain to complain of the mutability of fortune. Miss Kingley consoled him in the tenderest manner of his loss, which amounted to three shillings; adding, that she was also
a loser.

a lofer. The captain feemed attentive to what would please Mifs Kingley, and ſhe was delighted with the captains manner. He ſtayed to ſupper, as he was preſſed; and was invited to come and play a pool with them when it ſuited his inclination or convenience. A profuſion of compliments ſucceeded this invitation, and a multitude of flattering acknowledgements, which pleaſed Miſs Kingley ſo highly, that ſhe renewed it. Wills, ſeeing the humour his aunt was in, ſoon after the departure of the company, complained of being ſleepy, and took his candle; and, wiſhing his aunt a good night, went to bed.

The next morning, while he was gone to take an early walk, a poor old man who had been a long time a penſioner upon Wills's bounty, called to know if he was up. The aunt met him, and demanded his buſineſs. "It was only to ſee my "young maſter I came, good lady:" ſaid the poor old man, bowed down with age.

"And what do you want with him?"

"Ah, my lady, he has been the means
"of ſaving me and my two poor grand-
"child-

“children from starving. I had a son,
“and he was pressed, and killed in the last
“war; and my poor daughter, for she al-
“ways behaved to me like one, was left
“with two children; and about two years
“ago she died, and left me to take care
“of the two poor babes. And, indeed,
“sweeter children never my eyes beheld:
“and what could I do, a poor old man,
“now seventy-eight years old? They were
“not capable of taking care of themselves,
“so I was forced to take a woman to look
“after the children; but the allowance
“from the parish was not sufficient to sup-
“port us, and we were almost starving,
“when my young master, and the good
“gentleman that was along with him, came
“by accident near our cottage, and saw
“the two little ones at the door; and when
“they came in, I told them all that had
“befallen me; and they gave me money.
“My good master told me he would allow
“me eight pounds every year, and put out
“the boy, which is the eldest, prentice,
“when he was fit for it. I have remem-
“bered him in my prayers ever since: and
“my little innocents pray for him too, for
“he wiped the tear from my aged eyes,
“and

“and he made the hearts of the orphans
“glad. And the other gentleman allowed
“me five pounds a year more; but he is
“gone, and I have been to see where he is
“laid. It was the least I could do, to go
“and see the grave of the man who helped
“me in my distress. It was my misfortune
“to lose him to be sure, but it can’t be
“help’d. I mustn’t send the boy to school
“now, as I did before. I have walked nine
“long miles to see my master now.”

“Well then, honest man,” said Miss
Kingley, “you must return in the same man-
“ner you came, for my nephew is not with-
“in, nor do I know when he will come
“home. And I can tell you, that he has
“got no money to throw away if he was.”

“Ah! God bless him,” said the old
man, the tear trickling down his furrowed
cheek; “he desired me to come to him
“when I wanted any thing: but I must be
“contented, and try to reach home again,
“that I may have the satisfaction of dying
“with my poor children. And may God
“bless you, good Madam.”

He

He tottered through the court before the door, and pursued his journey. Miss Kingley returned to the parlour, and sat in expectation of her nephew's coming back to breakfast. It may appear odd, that her heart should all of a sudden be so totally estranged from the feelings of humanity, or that she should have so soon forgotten those lessons of benevolence which she formerly taught her nephew: yet these changes are frequently met with, and may be in part accounted for. Age, whose darling, and, in general, sole passion is avarice, was approaching her with hasty steps; besides, it has been often known that the generosity, and even prodigality, of a person with a middling fortune, has been changed into the most retentive avarice on a lucky encrease of wealth. The rich feel not the wants of the poor, nor will they relieve necessities they have no conception of.

At length Wills returned, and his aunt introduced the merit of Captain Mac Gregor, his frugality, and good sense. "If all his
"good sense," returned Wills, "consists
"in his maxims of frugality, it is but a
"negative virtue at best. Perhaps his cir-
"cum-

“circumstances will not allow him to be as
“generous as he would wish, and a false
“shame prevents his owning his compas-
“sionate sense of the wants of mankind,
“when he cannot relieve them: but surely
“the least he can give to distress is his
“pity.”

“And that’s all a person with a small
“fortune has occasion to give: for I have
“no notion of squandering away money
“upon people that one can get nothing
“by. If you were to get a proper return
“for your generosity, I should have not
“the least objection to your ——”

“It would cease to be generosity, when
“a return was expected.”

“That may be: but I am sure it would
“only be a proper regard to your own in-
“terest.”

“Ah! Madam, I have an interest in re-
“lieving the wants of the necessitous; I
“have every return I expect or hope for
“in it.”

I

“Yes

“Yes, Sir.” said she, “so you may; but let me tell you, that it would become you more, than encouraging lazy and idle people to come after you, to look after settling yourself in life.”

“Who has been after me, Madam,” said Wills, “that you have occasion to reproach me with it in this manner?”

“An old man, whom you and your tutor there, Mr. Brewer, I wish you had never seen him, supported, instead of letting the parish maintain him. What business have you to keep a family before you get one? But I sent the old fellow away as he came.”

“Good heaven! how long since?”

“Oh, a good hour ago.”

“Then,” said Wills, starting up from his untasted breakfast, “I may be able to overtake him before he gets far. How his poor old heart is wrung with anguish.”

He

He snatched his hat, and strode away, in hopes of finding him on his road before he reached home. Miss Kingley was in no very sweet humour when her nephew left her; but recollecting that he promised to allow this poor man so much a year, and that he would not break his word, which she admitted he ought to keep sacred, she began to be more reconciled to his abrupt departure; and her affection for him, which could only be exceeded by her inordinate love of money, prompted her to excuse this action. Pity succeeded, when she recollected that he had gone off without eating his breakfast: and then she feared he might be ill, and was sorry she turned the man away. But her final determination was, to lay the strictest injunction on him to avoid these extravagancies for the future, under pain of her displeasure; and this she intended to communicate to him on his return. Wills, whose uneasiness at the conversation that passed between him and his aunt, cannot well be described, walked as fast as his legs could carry him, in the road that led to the old man's cottage: he was not more surprized than vexed at this sudden change in his aunt's disposi-

tion: and though he loved her as a mother, and would not have disobliged her for any consideration, yet he foresaw that his pursuing this mode of disposing of his money, would be the cause of many bickerings between them. He saw, at that moment, the wrinkled face of avarice in all its horrors; and so ugly did it seem, that he abhorred it more than ever. These cogitations, and the unhappiness he felt at the poor old man's being sent away, as he had reason to fear, in so ungentle a manner from his aunt's house, beguiled the way, and he was greatly concerned lest he should not overtake the man before he reached home. But when he got on the top of a little eminence, he perceived him sitting by the road's side, resting himself, before he ventured to attempt to ascend the hill that rose before him. Wills made all the speed he could to get up to him, before he should pursue his walk. He need not have hurried himself, for the old man was too much wearied to go on again in haste. Fatigued with his walk, and sorely distressed at not meeting Wills, and what the lady had said to him, he sat in silent contemplation on his misfortunes. Wills approached him unperceived; his knees
sup-

supported his elbows, and his face was hid by his hands. Wills stood at his side without being noticed by him. "Well overtaken, father," said he. The old man lifted up his head, and seeing his benefactor, made an attempt to rise: "Don't stir," added Wills, "I will sit down by you." He did so. "I am sorry that I was not at home when you called, and that a mistake was the occasion of your being sent away in the manner you were, without my seeing you: but I set out in hopes of overtaking you, and I am lucky enough to find you on your road."

"Ah! Sir, you are too good to me: my necessities make me too troublesome: but God has that reward for you I am not able to give you."

"No more of that, father: have you eat or drank any thing yet?"

"Nothing have I tasted indeed, master: my poor little ones will want what I should spend upon myself, and I shall have more comfort in eating a bit with them."

Wills started up, and, casting his eyes about, descried a little ale-house at a small distance from them. "Come," said he, assisting him to rise, "I have had no breakfast neither, we will go and see what your house can afford us."

They travelled across two fields, and reached the house. Wills cautioned him against saying any thing about him, while they were there; and calling for some bread and cheese, and some beer, the only entertainment to be procured, they both fell to with a good appetite. And it is not to be doubted that Wills was better pleased with his repast, than if he had sat down to an elegant breakfast, served up in plate, and attended by half a dozen servants in livery. He pressed the poor heartless old man to eat, who, when he had refreshed and rested himself, expressed a desire to go homewards. Wills accompanied him; and when he seemed to think it might be too fatiguing for his young master to go so far, he assured him that he was determined, as he was above half way, to go to his house, and see the children. The grandfather could not

not contradict him, or oppose his inclination. He endeavoured to shorten the road, by the relation of those misfortunes which reduced him to that condition in which Wills found him. He had been a farmer; and his troubles arising from those accidents which neither prudence or vigilance can prevent or foresee, he became at length an object of charity himself, who had afforded it in the former part of his life to others. They arrived at last at home, and Wills was extremely pleased to see the manner in which the children were kept. He recompensed the woman who took care of them, for her trouble; and informing the old man, that for the future he would allow him twelve, instead of eight pounds a year, and also clothe the children, he left him, too much surprized and overwhelmed with gratitude and joy to utter a word, and hastened home.

His aunt, who had been uneasy at his stay, treated him with great kindness at dinner; but as soon as the things were removed, she renewed the conversation that had been interrupted by his abrupt

departure. "Well, Frank," said she, "how soon did you overtake your old pensioner?"

"About four miles from hence, Madam."

"Well, I don't blame you, child, for adhering to your word, if you promised to allow him so much a year; but I hope you have thought better of it, and not continued it to him: for you will have occasion for what money you have, to provide for yourself. I am not able to keep this house entirely by myself. When your aunts were alive, they had a third part each of the expence to bear. It all devolves upon me now, and I find it very heavy: therefore, my dear Frank, be frugal, and take care of the estate you have: for, if you continue to spend it so idly, you will certainly be in want yourself. Another thing I would recommend to you is, not to carry matters too far with Miss Collins: she has but four thousand pounds, and that won't be enough to buy you a place, which I think is the most eligible method of laying

“laying out your money. Besides, I have
“reason to believe that she is gay and ex-
“travagant; and I assure you I shall not
“give my consent to your being married
“to her. — There are several women of
“more prudence, and better fortunes, that
“would be glad to have such an handso-
“me young fellow as you are. I am going
“to Mrs. Popham’s to drink tea: will you
“accompany me?”

Wills replied in the negative; and, making an excuse that he was engaged, went out to take a solitary walk, and meditate on the situation of his affairs.

CHAPTER XV.

Prudence defeated by honesty. An adventure related.

THIS interdiction of his aunt's to marry Miss Collins, was a thunderbolt to the affection Wills had conceived for that young lady. "I love her," said he to himself, "and from what I have experienced in her behaviour, she is not averse to me. Shall I then, having endeavoured to inspire her with a tender passion for me, relinquish her from motives of interest? Perish the ungenerous, the detested thought! I should be deaf to all the suggestions of honour, did I not learn from her the state of her heart, and know upon what footing I am with her. Should she prefer me to any other man, I will immediately unite myself to her by the most sacred ties. We will live contentedly, and, I am sure, happily. But I will not disguise my aunt's dislike to it: I will open my heart to her, and display my situation. If she generously prefers me, I shall be the happiest of men. I have nothing to fear from the feelings of

“of her heart. Her mother indeed, may
“prevent her following the dictates of her
“inclination. The love of wealth is na-
“tural to age: my aunt is a sad example
“of it.” Pleasing himself with a thousand
romantic notions of happiness, which could
only be found in the brain of a young man,
of a fertile imagination, in love, he posted
away to Mrs. Collins’s: and luckily met
her at home, and her daughter, disengaged.
After the usual compliments, the mother
flipped away, and left the young people
alone. Wills fixed his eyes on the ground:
he sighed, and was silent. Miss Collins ob-
served, that he was very dull that evening,
and asked if he was well. “I am, Madam,
“very well as to my bodily health; but
“my mind is sick.”

“What can affect that, Mr. Wills?
“You were always merry and sprightly till
“now: sure there must be some great alte-
“ration in you. I hope there is no occa-
“sion for this change in your disposition.”

“It is possible to restore me to my for-
“mer disposition, Miss Collins; and it is in
“your power to do it.”

“In

“In mine, Sir!”

“You cannot misunderstand me. I have
“addressed you with a truth and sincerity,
“that is not common in the professions of
“men in general to the objects of their af-
“fections. I love you, charming maid,
“and you are no stranger to my passion:
“my intentions are the most honourable,
“I am now my own master. You are now
“at age. Your fortune is in your own hands.
“Will you consent to become irrevocably
“mine? This address may surprize you:
“take time to consider the answer on which
“the happiness of my future life depends.
“Think, if you can pass the remainder of
“your days with me.”

He paused. A thousand thoughts suggested themselves to Miss Collins, before she gave the decisive answer which Wills required. It is true, in her own breast she esteemed him more for his personal qualifications only, than any other lover she had: but the fortune that he expected from his aunt had also great weight with her. She was very artful, and concluded there was something more concealed under the solemnity

ity of his address, than she could at once penetrate. An equivocal answer was deemed the most proper on this occasion: and she muttered, intelligibly enough, that he was far from disagreeable to her; that she ever esteemed him: and that he was worthy of a much better wife than she could make him. "I cannot have, I do not desire a
"better," said Wills, his extasy getting the better of his reason; "but let me not deceive
"her on whom my heart doats. I need not
"again assure you of the sincerity and delicacy of my affection. I prefer you to all
"the women in the world, therefore I will
"act uprightly, and deal honestly by you.
"My aunt, from what reason, or by what
"advice I know not, has forbidden me to
"address you. She has declared I shan't
"have her consent; and she objects only
"the smallness of your fortune; but that
"is no objection to a man who loves as I
"do. It will assist in placing us in a genteel independence, equally removed from
"the contempt attending poverty, or the
"envy that waits on the rich. It will procure me some place, and my own little
"estate will help to support us. The pleasure I shall have in communicating my
"joys

“joys, or sharing my troubles, few as I
“hope will happen to us, with you, will
“make up for the want of riches. Thus
“I open my heart to you and you cannot
“hereafter reproach me with double-deal-
“ing. If I shall be so happy as to find
“I have inspired you with a mutual passion,
“and you shall overlook my want of a
“greater fortune, I shall be the most blef-
“fed of mankind; and all my future life
“shall be devoted to your service, and
“tend to convince you of the greatness
“and sincerity of my love.”

He stopped; but he might have gone on for half an hour longer, before she would have interrupted him. In short, Wills began to lose even those beauties of shape and face that she so foolishly before had thought she perceived in him. The want of fortune was a thing she had no notion of over-looking: and she could not conceive how a man could be so ridiculous as to talk of dwelling in a cottage, and living upon love. Happily for her it was, that her passions were never so violent, but she could call her recollection and reason to her aid; and while Wills was tel-

telling her, with his eyes suffused with tears, and an heart bleeding with anguish, how much he lamented the severity of his fate, she concluded, that it would be very absurd in her to lose so good a match as Mr. Peterfon, who began to look very shy upon her, from her apparent prepossession in favour of young Wills. But though these were her sentiments, a principle of shame prevented her from explaining them directly; as she had given him hopes, she could not retract of a sudden. She longed for her mother, or somebody, to come into the room, to break off a conversation which became extremely tedious, and would be much more so if it was continued. She was, however, obliged to answer him. She told him, “she
“was honoured by his attachment, and
“should always esteem him in proportion
“to his merits: that she knew not how
“she had incurred Miss Kingley’s displea-
“sure; was sorry for it; but had too great
“a regard for him, to suffer him to be
“ruined by an unhappy passion, which he
“might have conceived for her, and there-
“by forfeit his title to his aunt’s favour
“and fortune, which she had often heard
“her

“her declare she intended to leave him:
“it would be, therefore, more prudent
“for them both to forget each other, and
“though it might be painful, it was abso-
“lutely necessary that they should part.”

Wills heard her with attention, and was preparing to combat these reasons. He began to speak. His words died upon his tongue. He threw himself on his knees before her, and caught her hand in his. “If you favour me with your love, Miss Collins, if you will consent to be mine, I shall not mind my aunt’s favour, or——”

The door opened, and to his utter confusion, Peterson entered. When Wills was in that posture, he hesitated, and seemed doubtful whether he should go in or no: but seeing him start up in disorder, and perceiving Miss Collins looking very disdainfully at him, crying at the same time: “that she wondered how Mr. Wills could be so extremely foolish,” he took courage, and ventured in. “Lord, Mr. Peterson,” said Miss Collins, “what prevents your coming in? We are upon no business that you can interrupt: Mr. Wills

“Wills’ had only a mind to make himself “ridiculous.” Wills’s blood boiled at this speech; but he determined not to make himself more ridiculous, by exposing his vexation. At one moment he thought this might only be a feint of Miss Collins’s to conceal her uneasiness at being thus balked; but he was soon undeceived. Peterfon had no reason to complain of the coldness of her behaviour to him that evening; and he saw, with pleasure, the mortifications of a rival whom he so much feared. Wills was left to the indulgence of his own thoughts; for Miss Collins did not much disturb him by talking to him, or asking him questions. Nor was he at a loss to conceive the reason of this change; for it followed so suddenly the confession he made her, that it was as perfectly understood, as if she had told him her reasons verbally. Grievously chagrined as Wills was by her behaviour, he could not think of staying any longer there, and affording fresh matter of triumph to his rival. He therefore departed, without being pressed to stay; and took a round-about way to go home, as well to kill time, as to be delivered up entirely to his own reflections. He saw
K through

through Miss Collins's treatment of him, and perceived very plainly, that the prospect he had of inheriting his aunt's fortune was the greatest charm to her. So mercenary a temper, the direct reverse of his own, gave Wills no small disgust: it alienated his affections from her, and she appeared not the same amiable girl in his eyes which he had till then thought her. But he determined to make another trial of her, and know whether she was resolved to forsake him. Thus,

Ruminating sweet and bitter thought,

he fauntered along. But his *reverie* was disturbed by some outcries, that seemed to him to proceed from a person in distress. The thought was enough: he flew to the spot whence he supposed the noise came. He was right. A gentleman was defending himself, as well as he could, against three ruffians, who were treating him very ill, and, to all appearance, wanted to rob him. The eagerness of the attack, and the vigour of the resistance, prevented their perceiving Wills's approach. With an excellent stick, which he generally made the companion of his walks, he brought two
of

of them to the earth; the other, deprived of his associates, fled with great nimbleness. "Sir," said the gentleman, "I am under vara great obligations till you for your timely assistance."

"Ha! Captain M'Gregor, I am very happy indeed in rendering you any service."

"Oh! Maister Wills, are you my deliverer? In gude troth, ye're a bonny chiel: but what mun we do with these dogs here?"

"Let them depart," said Wills; "their own consciences, perhaps laden with crimes, will be punishment enough for them. Affected by our lenity, they may live to repent."

"Hoot awa," replied the Captain; "they shall be hanged: we're match enough for them now, and we'll incarcerate them; they shall be made examples of *in terrorem*."

"Come, come, Captain, you have lost nothing by them, you are only a little
K 2 fright-

“frightened; let us not be instrumental
“in depriving these poor wretches of life.
“You,

“Thought by that pow’r that pities you,
“Shou’d learn to pity them.”

“Weel, weel, Maister Wills, fyn ye
“turn advocate for them I wull na pro-
“ceed to extremities. Ye may gang your
“gait, you lousy dogs ye, ye’ll be hanged
“yet for a’ this.”

“You have had an escape now,” said
Wills to the fellows who stood motionless
and abashed before him: “let it be a cau-
“tion to you to shun the paths of villany
“for the future. If necessity induced you
“to commit this act of violence, it may
“be an excuse, though a very poor one;
“for honest industry can never want a sub-
“sistence, or bread to eat. Lest want
“should prompt you to repeat your offence,
“divide that guinea between you; go thy
“ways, and do so no more. If any other
“cause urged you to this deed, such as
“wanting the means to support your idle-
“ness or extravagance, my admonitions I
“fear will be in vain; yet the dread of a
shame.

“shameful punishment, if you have no
 “regard for virtue or honesty, should put
 “a stop to this practice.”

He held out the guinea towards the
 nearest of them, M'Gregor pulled back
 his hand. “What the de'el, Maister
 “Wills, are you going to reward the
 “villains?”

“You need not have prevented the
 “young gentleman's generosity,” said one
 of the men. “I would not have taken it
 “from him: I see his nobleness of spirit,
 “and admire it. The brave are always
 “generous and humane. For my part, I
 “have, in other times, been in a better
 “way than this; and the reproof I have
 “met to-night has affected me more, than
 “corporal punishment would have done. I
 “thank you for your lenity, Sir: it has
 “had the desired effect. I will forsake my
 “evil courses, and you shall have all the
 “merit of my conversion.”

“I am surprized to hear a man, who
 “acts in the character of a robber, speak
 “in such a stile, and express such senti-
 “ments:

“ments: there is some mystery in this,
“and if you will rely on my honour —”

“That I would willingly,” returned the other; “but this mystery cannot be unravelled now. All I hope for, is to meet you in some place, when I may be able to return you the service you have done me this night. Will you tell me your name?”

“Wills.”

“It is enough. I shall retain it in my memory till my dying hour; and when I dare pray, you shall be remembered.”

He beckoned to his companion, who spoke not a word; and jumping over the ditch, gained the fields, and soon became invisible in the shades of night.

C H A P T E R XVI.

A conversation. Another attempt of WILLS's; its success; and another adventure begun.

“AND which way do you go, Cap-
“tain?”

“I am going your road, as I intended
“to sleep wi’ my friend to-night.”

“Well, then, we shall be companions.”

“It’s vara agreeable; but I don’t believe
“that rascal’s dying hour, as he ca’s it, is
“far off.”

“I am of another opinion, Captain: he
“may live to be a very worthy member of
“the community yet; perhaps he has a
“wife and children who are starving, and
“the only way he has of supporting them,
“and keeping them alive, is by commit-
“ting these acts of violence.”

“Weel, Sir, vara weel, Sir, it may be
“fo; but then he ought to be hanged.
“When a man lives in a country governed
“by laws, and he transgresses any o’ those
“laws, he should suffer such punishment as
“they prescribe; and if I donna mistake,
“there is a punishment annexed to the
“compounding a crime of this nature.”

“There may be so,” said Wills, “but
“I cannot suppose myself liable to punish-
“ment; or imagine I have broken any
“law, human or divine, by not assisting
“you in the apprehending those unhappy
“wretches, and delivering them over to
“the hand of justice. Suppose the crime is
“capital, and their lives forfeited by the
“commission of it, how could you recon-
“cile it to yourself to punish that man with
“death, who had only taken part of your
“property?”

“Most undoubtedly: else wherefore do
“we live under that law, which makes it a
“crime worthy death?”

“That must be the fault of that law:
“for by the most equitable law, which is
that

“that of retaliation, *lex talionis*, an eye for
“an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, is only
“required: but, in case of murder, I own
“there should be a deprivation of life;
“there no restoration can be: but in cases
“of robbery or theft, where there is no
“corporal damage or injury sustained, if
“the offender was compelled to restore
“threefold what he had taken, or, if he
“had no goods of his own, to be kept to
“work in a house, set apart for that pur-
“pose, till the profits of his labour should
“amount to the sum he was to pay, it
“might answer a very good end. Let him
“also fine to the king, as chief magistrate
“and head of that community, whose laws
“he had violated. A regulation of this
“kind would make a capital punishment
“more terrible, as it would be less com-
“mon. Hanging is thought nothing of
“now, it’s only what is seen every day;
“and we have an instance that a man would
“rather be hanged than transported, be-
“cause, during the term of his punishment,
“he should be obliged to work. A man
“who was cast for transportation petitioned
“his Majesty for that purpose. And I
“do not imagine there is a nation under
“the

“the fun, who could make a song on the
“awful solemnity of a criminal convicted
“going to suffer death, and turn the whole
“into ridicule, but the English. A sol-
“dier, you must know, captain, acquires
“a mechanical courage; from seeing so
“many fall dead round him, he grows in-
“ured to the sight, and disregards it.”

“You’re vara right there, indeed, Mai-
“ster Wills; it’s vara true. The frequency
“of public executions takes awa’ from the
“terror of them: but even allowing a’
“that, do you na think that you were
“wrong in offering a reward, of fae muckle
“a sum as a guinea too, to a man wha was
“going to cut my throat?”

“Why, captain, do you ask me that
“question? it is doubtless to give me an
“opportunity of explaining my principles.
“If it was mere and absolute want that
“induced them to commit such an action,
“sure it was much better to relieve them,
“than, by letting them continue in the
“same necessitous situation, compel them
“to be guilty of the same crime again. If
“it had been habitual to them, they would
“not

"not have refused the money I offered.
 "Avarice is the cause of robbery: and
 "surely they would not hesitate at less dis-
 "honourable means of coming at money;
 "neither would the man have spoken to
 "me as he did: that very circumstance
 "may shew him, that it is not necessary
 "to use violence to get at money. Parnell
 "has illustrated a circumstance something
 "like this in his poem of the Hermit, in
 "the character of the avaricious and pe-
 "nurious man, when the silver cup is left
 "with him. The poet says,

With him I left the cup, to teach his mind
 That heav'n can bless, if mortals will be kind.
 Conscious of wanting worth, he views the bowl,
 And feels compassion touch his grateful soul.
 Thus artists melt the sullen ore of lead,
 With heaping coals of fire upon its head:
 In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
 And, loose from dross, the silver runs below.

"Unexpected acts of beneficence have
 "wrought wonderful changes."

"I dunna doubt it; but I believe there
 "will be na change wrought in him. I dun-
 "na think that he wa'd be a bit the better
 "for going to the university of Glasgou."

"May

“May be not,” said Wills, laughing.

“You misunderstand me, Sir,” replied the captain, a little piqued at the joke; “I mean, that he is so hardened in his wickedness, that no gude example, or precept either, wou’d have any effect on him, or cause an amendment in his manners: and I cannot help thinking, that your intending to give the mon a guinea, was equally unprecedented and wrong; for it was only encouraging the villain, and your lenity was a’ misplaced. Now, if he had been confined in prison, or hanged, as he deserved, he cou’d na’ ha’ ve been guilty of the same crime again: I think that you will be accessory to every crime he commits in consequence of your letting him escape now. And in gude troth, it had na’ happen’d, if you had na’ been the interceder for him.”

“Well, captain, I am obliged to you.”

“Nay, nay, not so,” replied the captain, interrupting him: “You have done me a signal service, and I shou’d endeavour to return it, though it was contrary

“trary to my inclinations that the rascal
“escaped.”

By this time they were near Miss Kingley's house, and Wills insisted on his going in with him. There was little force necessary. The captain was glad of the invitation and complied with it. Miss Kingley trembled at the danger the poor captain had been in, and swallowed the praises he bestowed upon her nephew very greedily. But she joined him against poor Wills, when she came to hear of his having solicited and procured the release of the robbers; and the offer of the guinea made her outrageous. “You should not be trusted
“with money,” said the parsimonious aunt,
“if you know not how to make a better
“use of it.” Wills thought it hard that Mc. Gregor should take a part against him, and in vain endeavoured to defend himself: while she equally commended the captain's resolution of punishing the rogues, and condemned her nephew for his proceedings, adding bitter reproof. He remained silent, satisfied with what he had done; and listened, though not attentively, to the captain and his aunt, strengthening each other
in

in those prudential maxims which they had laid down as rules for their conduct. Wills's head ran upon other things, and Miss Collins was still uppermost in his thoughts. He was therefore very glad when the captain took his leave after supper; for Miss Kingley could not think of parting with him till he had refreshed himself, and recovered from the terror this adventure had thrown him into.

Wills retired to bed, but enjoyed very little rest: he resolved to have a final answer from Miss Collins respecting his suit; though, from what he had seen, he did not imagine it would be very favourable. His aunt's prejudice in favour of Mc Gregor did not give him much uneasiness. "If she has a mind to bestow her hand and fortune upon him," said he to himself, "it is out of my power to prevent it: and if it was not, surely I, who am the child of her bounty, should rather do every thing in my power to give her pleasure, than hinder it. Besides, what right have I to expect her fortune? She may be tired of doing me good offices, and has already performed more than I could be taught

“taught to hope for. It will be no disappointment to me, to lose what I had, but little reason to suppose I should enjoy. I have got my father’s estate, and that is all, and more than I had a right to expect.” In these reflexions he passed the greater part of the night; and resigned himself, about morning, to that repose he wanted. He let two days escape before he went to Mrs. Collins’s. They were at home to him; and, on his introduction, he found Peterfon there. This chagrined him not a little: for he hoped to have an opportunity of resuming the conversation that had been broken off so abruptly before. As this employed his attention to contrive means to bring it about, he sat silent and thoughtful. Peterfon and Miss Collins were either talking to each other, or toying; insomuch that they minded nobody else. Mrs. Collins roused Wills, by telling him, that the next day her daughter was to become Mrs. Peterfon.

“To-morrow! Madam.”

“Yes, indeed, Sir, to-morrow.”

“Yes,

“Yes, Sir,” added Peterson, “to-morrow makes me the happiest of men.”

“May you always continue so, Sir,” replied Wills, whom this conversation mortified extremely. The other bowed, and said he did not fear a continuation of happiness with the charming Miss Collins.

Wills now saw it was all over with him. He also saw through her motives for preferring his rival, and despised her in his heart. The present mode of insulting him too was shocking. With these sentiments it was no difficult thing to banish her entirely from his remembrance. Her face had no longer charms for him: there was no music in her voice, or delicacy in her person: her sordid temper threw an odious mist around her; and so thick it was, that Wills's eye could not perceive one beauty through it. He staid there a reasonable time, that he might not afford them too great a triumph over him; and behaved with remarkable indifference, with some attempt at gaiety. He rallied the lady, with good humour, on her approaching change of condition; and assigned it as a reason for his going away so soon,

soon, that his presence prevented her making those preparations which would be necessary for her appearance the next day. Miss Collins was not well pleased at this apparent indifference: it robbed her of her glory, and prevented Peterfon from esteeming her so highly as he would have otherwise done, if Wills had seemed more concerned: for she did not choose to tell him the cause why she had rejected Wills, and admitted his addresses; and he was so much intoxicated with pleasure at her consenting to become his wife, that he did not trouble himself to enquire what her reasons were. He was happy, and did not care how he came so.

Wills left the house; without the least spark of affection remaining in his bosom for Miss Collins: there was a painful void left; and he could not sometimes help thinking on the person that had formerly so agreeably occupied it. However, he thoroughly despised her, and there was no fear of his relapsing. She was lost to him for ever. Poor Brewer's history used frequently to occur to his remembrance, and would almost inspire him with an hatred to the whole sex.

L

It

It was near night when he left Mrs. Collins's, and passing through the Birdcage-walk to go through Buckingham gate to Chelsea, his eye was caught with a female, whose carriage and air bespoke her superior to the generality of the unhappy wretches that ply there continually: and earn a wretched and precarious subsistence by the most abandoned prostitution. He walked softly behind her, and perceived a great appearance of poverty in her dress: yet she was clean, and aimed not at that flashing finery, to set off her person, that the rest did. Her hat was flapped over her eyes; nor did she lift up her head, which hung upon her breast in silent dejection. The sound of his steps behind her could not make her turn her eyes towards him: and he thought he heard her sob, but he could hear her sighs very plainly. Her pace was slow, and pensive: and she appeared regardless of every object that passed by her. Such a conduct seemed more calculated to repress, than stimulate desire. Wills followed her a long time, endeavouring to account to himself, but in vain, for her behaviour. Her apparent distress awakened his compassion, not more than

than her manner his curiosity: and though he was well aware of the tricks practised by the adventurers who frequent that place, prepared to accost her. In what manner he did it the reader will find in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

This adventure continued.

HOW to address her, Wills could not easily settle with himself. If she was a person really in sorrow, as she seemed, he could never have forgiven himself for speaking to her in an harsh or distressing manner. He could not behave rudely to her; that was not in his nature, even tho' he considered her as one of those victims devoted to pleasure. While he was employed in these cogitations, and undetermined how to act, she had gained the upper end of the shady walk, cast her eyes upon Rosamond's Pond, sighed, and turned about to go back again. At that moment Wills met her: and he found he must speak to her, or remain unsatisfied

tified concerning her situation, which he wished much to know. "Where are you going, Madam?" said he, in the softest tone of voice he could possibly assume. She stopped; gazed at him, but answered not. He repeated the question, "Where are you going, Madam?"

"I am going," answered she, "to perish upon the bosom of an unfortunate father, who knows not this moment what is become of me. Don't hinder me from dying in his ——"

She could no more: her sobs choaked her utterance, and she had been suffocated with the rising gust of passion, if a shower of tears had not relieved her.

Wills, who expected one of the usual answers to his question, stood thunder-struck at this reply. "Why do you think of dying, Madam? Your youth promises you a long life: and why should you turn your thoughts on the grave?"

"Want, distress, and the bitterest stings of poverty, will cut the thread of life," said she. "Mine is almost gone."

"Can

“Can money relieve you from your
“present necessities? If it is not beyond my
“power to assist you, I will willingly do
“it. My heart is susceptible of your woes,
“and I want nothing but the ability to
“remove them. You must let me know
“what they are, and perhaps I may be of
“service to you. Accept these two gui-
“neas from me: I have no more about
“me.”

“And what recompence do you desire,”
said she, in a determined accent, “for
“these two guineas?”

“None other than the consideration that
“it has been in my power to relieve you,
“and that I have the conscious satisfaction
“of rescuing you from want.”

“It is too much,” returned she: “it
“is too much! and so unlike the customs
“of this world, that I can scarce believe it
“real: but yet I have read and heard of
“such exalted and disinterested generosity,
“and perhaps I may have now met with
“it. May it be so!”

Her voice faltered as she spoke. A chair happened fortunately to be near her, she threw herself into it, and indulged the flood of tears that eased her labouring heart. Wills seated himself beside her, and waited till the first pause in her distress and sobbing, to speak to her. "I assure you
"I have no other motive than what I told
"you: but your language and manners so far
"above your appearance, and the place you
"are in at this time in the evening, astonish
"me. Forgive my inquisitiveness, if I ask
"you what is the meaning of your tears?
"My curiosity is laudable, and the whole
"intention of it is to serve you."

"I cannot disbelieve it, Sir; and I will
"give you an opportunity of exercising
"your humanity. But," said she, rising,
"I must hasten to my father, who is per-
"haps perishing for want of food at this
"very moment."

"Oh heavens!" said Wills, "but where
"is he?"

"Confined in a loathsome jail; but, in-
"deed, Sir, for no crime, except that of
"being

“being too tenacious of his own and his
“unhappy daughter’s honour.”

“Then do not delay,” replied Wills,
“we’ll hasten together to him.”

“Alas, Sir, the sight would be too
“shocking for you to support; I can hardly
“bear it myself, though accustomed and
“inured to misery.”

They walked down the walk together.
Assured of Wills’s honest intentions, she
supported herself by his arm as they pro-
ceeded. “But,” said he, “if I cannot
“see him to-night, I hope you will give
“me leave to call and see you both to-mor-
“row morning. Where is he? and how
“shall I find him out?”

“His name is Belton, and he is con-
“fined in the Marshalsea Prison in the
“borough of Southwark.”

“I do not know the place, but I shall
“easily find it: and you may be assured I
“will call there on you in the morning.”

“Ah, Sir,” replied Sophia Belton, “it
“is long since we have seen the appear-
“ance of a friend in our distressed situation:
“and tho’ your goodness may induce you
“to come to us, yet it is so dreadful a
“place——”

“I regard not the appearance of any
“place, however frightful, where I can
“have an opportunity of serving merit or
“virtue in distress.”

“Indeed, Sir, these are noble senti-
“ments; but you’ll learn from my father
“how those who professed such as these,
“have not adhered to them.”

By this time they reached the street;
and Wills, calling a coach, put her into
it, and giving the coachman directions
where to drive, paid him his fare, and
took leave of Sophia, assuring her he
should not fail to see her again in the
morning.

He strode homewards as fast as he could,
his mind filled with conjectures of what
could be the cause of this young woman’s
distress,

distress, and with reflections on the scene he had gone through. At home he met the Captain in a *tete à tete* with his aunt, and though his heart and imagination were entirely occupied with what had passed, yet he knew their tempers too well to acquaint them with it. Mac Gregor seemed daily to increase in favour with his aunt, and treated him with respect, though he always took her part, and indeed echoed her words when the conversation ran on frugality, œconomy, or prudence.

Wills, anxious to know the bottom of this affair, rose early in the morning, and his fear of breaking in upon Mr. Belton too abruptly, and sooner than he was expected, only prevented his entering the prison betimes: for he would rather have been guilty of an incivility to his superior, than offend the tender sensibility of distress by any roughness in his behaviour; and that was always so affectionate, so open, and cordial, that misery forgot her sorrows when they were alleviated by him. He waited impatiently for the time that would authorize him to appear before Mr. Belton. At length it came; and he approach-

ed the entrance of that prison, which, if thou hast never been in, it will not be amiss, gentle reader, to give thee a description of, that thou mayest know, if thou canst form an adequate idea of it from our draught, in what a wretched place those miscreants are confined, who owe their fellow subjects and fellow creatures the enormous sum of forty shillings. It is our wish that thou mayest never enter it, except, as Wills did, incited by humanity and compassion.

As you quit the main street, a dirty court presents itself to your view, which is terminated by large gates, closed with a massy bar of iron, fastened with an enormous padlock. The top of the high wall over it is guarded by a *chevaux de frize*, to prevent the unhappy prisoners making their escape. By a narrow door, which you go up three steps to, on your right hand, and which is secured with a weighty chain and a large lock, you enter through a dirty room, which is the station of the turnkey. The horrid clanking of the chain, or the dreadful sound of the lock, is sufficient to terrify you; but when you descend into the prison, it is wretched almost

almost beyond description. Houses, in which are apartments for the prisoners, with scarce a window, except in those whose inhabitants can afford to pay for them. Walls tottering to their fall. A small enclosure, where those who chuse it may exercise themselves with playing at ball, is in the middle of the area of the prison; this is all the spot of earth allowed them to recreate themselves in, if it can be called recreation. The sight of this wretched place, but, above all, the appearance of the unhappy people who are confined, must afflict the hearts of those who have the smallest spark of feeling. A set of miserable creatures, meagre through want, squalid and pale with confinement, perhaps the objects of pique and malevolence, and imprisoned at the suit of some relentless creditor, whose overgrown fortune would not suffer a perceptible diminution from the loss of five times the debt. There may be some, who, pursuing fraudulent methods, have drawn this heavy vengeance upon themselves: but they are few in comparison of the unfortunate; and surely the laws should make some distinction between misfortune and guilt.

Wills,

Wills, when he beheld this horrid scene, was affected so much, that he scarce knew how to go forward. He stared about him, wild with astonishment, and melted with pity. He paused some moments, before he could recollect himself sufficiently to enquire after Mr. Belton: and he was soon put in the way of finding his room. When he knocked at the door, Sophia, who was taught to expect him, opened it; and he walked into a very small room, which, by the assiduity of Sophy, was kept clean, tho' there was scarce any furniture in it, except two chairs, a little table, and a bed without curtains, in which lay an old man whose face seemed furrowed with the tears that had trickled down his eyes and cheeks. Wills's heart was so full that he could not speak: he silently seated himself in the chair that Sophy had placed for him, while she sat down on the bed-side by her father. "This is the gentleman," said she, "that relieved me last night; this is he to whom you are indebted for your life. Indeed," added she, turning to him, "we had not eat a bit for two days before. I was able to get a little milk for my father, and that was all the support he had." Wills groan-

groaned, for his tongue was tied. He had never beheld such a scene of distress, and it was beyond his conception how human nature could exist in it. "I do not know, Sir," said old Belton, in a faint voice, "to what motive to attribute the honour of this visit from you. If to your humanity, and the desire of assisting the wretched, and alleviating the woes of the afflicted, it is truly praise-worthy, and the reward of virtuous actions will attend you for it: but, if you come here with a view of insulting my misery, or seducing that wretched girl, who has no other portion but her innocence, I pray you retire, and leave us to our fate. We have been, for some time past, expecting the welcome hand of death to relieve us from this dreadful situation: a king of terrors to others, but to us the best of friends."

Wills, who could not bear to think that Mr. Belton should suppose he had visited them from such detestable motives, first found his speech, in vindication of himself. The old man seemed pleased with his warmth, and satisfied with his reasons. "You

“You will excuse me,” said he, “Sir, for
“speaking thus to you. I have suffered
“much from the villany of mankind. You
“are a stranger to me, and a young man.
“My poor girl here, before hunger and
“want had withered the roses in her cheeks,
“and continual weeping had dimmed the
“lustre of her eyes, was a desirable ob-
“ject: she was more, she was handsome:
“she was better, she was virtuous and
“good; the delight of her father’s heart,
“and the consolation of his woes. Her
“sufferings have affected me more than my
“own; and the dread of what will be-
“come of her when I am dead, has given
“me more pain, than the separation of soul
“and body would.”

The poor girl’s tears flowed apace: the
big tear rolled down the venerable old man’s
face: and Wills did not, could not, refuse
to join them. “Sir,” said he, “I was mov-
“ed with your daughter’s distress last night,
“and I am come here this day to see if I
“can be of any service to you in settling
“your affairs. Let me know if I can
“serve you: and be assured, I will do it
“to the utmost of my power.”

“I be-

“I believe,” said Mr. Belton, “your
“professions are sincere: but, whether they
“are or no, you can do me no injury now.
“I am fallen below the reach of malevolence
“or ingratitude. I will try to collect my
“spirits sufficiently to give you a detail of
“my misfortunes, and trace the steps that
“brought me here. It will be a good les-
“son to you, Sir, who have yet numbered
“but few years, to teach you, that you
“may do infinite mischief by letting your
“passions get the better of justice and rea-
“son. This is the least I can do for you,
“in return for your civility and good treat-
“ment to that poor friendless girl last
“night: she was out without my know-
“ledge.

“Misery is sacred with me, Sir,” said
Wills, interrupting him: “it is no merit in
“me to treat it with respect. But, as you
“are not perfectly recovered and as it
“may be too fatiguing to go through your
“history without some refreshment, will
“you take it amiss, if I beg the favour of
“you to give me liberty to dine with you
“to-day? I will just step out, and order
“something nourishing and proper for you.”
“I shall

“I shall be obliged to you for your company; but Sophy knows better where to order these things than you do.”

“If she will be so obliging as to shew me the way, I will go with her.”

They went out together, and he soon found a tavern, from whence he ordered some broth, and other things fit for a weak stomach. But previous to his going into the house, he slipped five guineas into Sophy's hand.

“You may be in want of some necessities. Nay, no apology or refusal; I will not hear of either: and when I think our dinner will be nearly ready, I will wait on you again. In the mean time, you had better go to your father, and assist him.”

She obeyed him without hesitation; and in her way back she was obliged to call at a neighbouring pawnbroker's to release some apparel, without which her father could not appear before Wills. When the dinner was ready, he returned to Mr. Belton, whom

whom he found up and dressed, sitting on the side of his bed to receive him. He was clean and had the appearance and demeanour of a man who had known better days. He endeavoured, weak as he was, to rise when Wills came in: but this he prevented, by sitting down on the bedside by him. They conversed on different topics for a short time, and he found Mr. Belton a man well acquainted with the world. He had also an opportunity of remarking Sophy; and saw that beauty her father had boasted of, shed a faint lustre over her features. Dinner coming in, put an end to their conversation. After this repast, Belton found himself much refreshed: and, thinking Wills anxious to know the cause of his misfortunes, began his story, as follows.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The history of Mr. BELTON.

“I Am the son of a physician, whose
“learning, skill, and understanding,
“were sufficient to have insured him prac-
“tice, had he been known: but, as for-
“tune was not very favourable, he lan-
“guished in obscurity; and though he
“lived decently and frugally, he found
“himself going backwards in the world.
“He gave me a school education, which
“was all he could afford. He had, in
“his younger days, some intimacy with
“lord Cotswold, with whom he had been
“at college. They had not seen each
“other for a long while: but my father,
“anxious to provide for me, or give me
“some opportunity of settling in life, de-
“termined to pay him a visit, and apply
“to him for his interest. When he made
“himself known, his lordship embraced
“him, and assured him he would do every
“thing in his power to serve me: and de-
“fired my father to bring me to him. In
“a few days I accordingly went; and his
“lord-

"lordship seemed well pleased with me,
 "and my answers to the several questions
 "he asked me; and then proposed to my
 "father to take me into the house to be
 "a companion to his son, who was young-
 "er than me. "He will have an oppor-
 "tunity of being better instructed here,"
 "said his lordship, "and I will take care
 "of his future fortune. My father em-
 "braced the proposal with joy; and in
 "a short time I repaired to his house."

"The young lord was as lovely in his
 "person, as amiable in his manners: we
 "soon grew very fond of each other, and
 "pursued our appointed exercises with mu-
 "tual delight, as we were together. The
 "time came when we were to be separated.
 "He went to the university, and thence to
 "travel. His father placed me under the
 "gentleman who was his agent. I don't
 "mean that you should make yourself an
 "attorney, said his lordship to me. It
 "is my design, that you shall supply the
 "place of my present agent whenever he
 "dies; and all the knowledge necessary
 "for you, is, to be acquainted with that
 "part of the business relative to the ma-

“nagement of my estate. I am convinced
“that you will be faithful and diligent,
“from your attachment to me, which I
“have no reason to doubt of. I assured
“him I should never deceive his expecta-
“tions.”

“Soon after this my father died, and I
“became an entire dependant on his lord-
“ship’s family, for he left me nothing be-
“side his blessing. My attention and dili-
“gence, and the character the gentleman I
“was with gave his lordship of me, pleased
“him exceedingly: He became a father to
“me in the room of him I had lost; and
“at last, by the death of the agent, I was
“invested with that title; and lord Cotf-
“wold had the greatest reason to be satis-
“fied with my integrity and attention to
“his affairs.”

“Soon after this, the young lord came
“home; his friendship was as great for me
“as ever; and he rejoiced at my situation,
“which would necessarily always make me
“near him. He assisted at my marriage,
“and made my wife some very genteel pre-
“sents. He was very frequently at our
“house;

“house; and his professions of friendship
“were unlimited, and I believed them fin-
“cere. His father died when he was about
“eighteen, and he became earl of Cotswold.
“Our little Sophy was at that time two
“years old. I was confirmed in my em-
“ployment, and my eyes were delighted
“with a prospect of happiness that they
“were not to possess. Fifteen years passed
“away in uninterrupted felicity. My little
“Sophy encreased in beauty; and her ac-
“complishments were the joy of our hearts,
“for she was the only one left us; we
“had three others, who died before they
“were acquainted with trouble. Lord
“Cotswold had married a lady with a large
“fortune, and though she was a very fine
“woman, they did not live happily toge-
“ther. He would be very often, for a
“week together, at our house: It was
“more agreeable, he used to say, to him
“than his own; and frequently complain-
“ed of his unhappy situation. My wife
“and daughter were the constant auditors
“of these complaints, and ever consoled
“him in the best manner they could. He
“found comfort in their consolation, and
“repeated his complaints. At this period

“my misfortunes first began: I became
“security for a man whom I thought honest,
“and who must have been inevitably ruin-
“ed if I had not served him; a man who
“was indebted to me for many good offices.
“I was bound for four hundred pounds
“for him: he broke his faith with me, and
“fled. I became liable for the money,
“and I had it not in the world: for I had
“too much regard for my lord’s interest,
“to think of enriching myself at his ex-
“pence. The persons to whom the money
“was due came upon me, and I had but
“two hundred pounds of my own. In
“the midst of the distress and confusion
“caused by this accident, lord Cotswold
“came to our house. The trouble and
“concern that was painted so visibly on
“the countenances of the family alarmed
“him: he asked what was the matter:
“with some difficulty they informed him.
“Let not that create you a moment’s un-
“easiness. — He called for pen and ink,
“and directly drew upon his banker for
“the sum that was deficient. I was abroad
“during this transaction: and when I came
“home, they met me with joy and trans-
“port. I asked the meaning of it. They
“shewed

“shewed me the draft. I am not surprised at his lordship’s generosity, said I to my wife. We must live frugally till we can make the sum up again for him. But where is his lordship, that I may return him my thanks?”

“He is gone away on purpose to avoid them.”

“I shall see him soon again, though.”

“I did so, and paid him those acknowledgements he so well deserved. I offered him a bond for the money. No, no, Belton, said he, only leave me a memorandum that such a thing has happened.”

“I gave him my note instantly, payable on demand.”

“This will do, said he, very well; though if you should die, I shall never take any notice of it, and I believe you are pretty safe with it while you live.”

“His visits to us were more frequent
“than heretofore. And several presents he
“made Sophy, which were rich and valu-
“able, alarmed the prudence of the mo-
“ther, who began to perceive in his affi-
“duity to our daughter, something more
“than friendship to the father. This
“she communicated to me, and I deter-
“mined to watch his proceedings very
“narrowly, and, too soon for my peace,
“I found his eyes tell the secret of his
“heart. He used to gaze on the innocent
“Sophia, with the most ardent transport;
“not a glance, not a word, not a motion
“escaped him. Master of the soft arts of
“persuasion, he would lament his misery,
“and blame his fate, that had placed him
“with a woman he could not love: he
“drew his own domestic troubles in such
“strong and striking colours, that he forced
“tears from the eyes of my wife and
“daughter. He thought by melting her
“heart to pity, to inspire it with love.
“But while he proceeded in this manner
“there could be no objection made to him.
“And as yet he had gone no further.
“Sophy’s charms began to expand, with
“all the sweetness of the blushing rose:
“His

“His passion was wound up to the height;
“it was visible in all his words, all his
“actions. We thought it necessary to cau-
“tion Sophia from taking any more pre-
“sents from him. She obeyed us; and
“the next day she had occasion to put our
“injunction in practice. His lordship pre-
“sented her with an esclavage: it was an
“heart bound in diamond chains. The
“jewels were rich, and it was a noble pre-
“sent. Sophia refused it. Why, Miss
“Belton, will you refuse to accept this
“trifle from my hands?”

“A trifle, my lord? You may think
“it so, but I am sure it is too costly for
“me to wear, and does not suit my station
“in life: I must therefore beg leave to
“decline accepting it.”

“You are fit for the most exalted
“station, returned he, and would do
“honour to it. Would to heaven you
“had been lady Cotswold in the room of
“the present! I should have been happy,
“instead of the miserable wretch I am now.
“I beseech you, my dear Sophy, to take
“this: I bought it on purpose for you.”

“My wife, who was present at this conversation, interposed. She begged him to excuse her daughter; who had already been distinguished by several marks of his generosity and bounty; and that it would afford an opportunity to the malicious to depreciate her character, which was all she had to depend on, if she appeared decked out in such magnificent presents. She therefore entreated him to spare her the mortification and grief of hearing her child traduced through his lordship’s kindness.”

“Oh, said he, you distress my heart, by this refusal: it is my greatest happiness to see her charms decorated in the most splendid manner, and her eyes outshine the diamonds.”

“Oh, my lord, you should not inspire the poor child with such vain notions.”

“They are the sentiments of my heart,” replied he; I can no longer conceal them. I burn, I languish for the charming Sophy. I adore her. My love drinks up my blood, and destroys me. The
“secret

“secret my breast has laboured with for
 “two years is now revealed, and I am
 “the most miserable fellow this day exist-
 “ing, denied the possession of her I love,
 “and confined to her I do not.”

“He threw himself into an arm-chair
 “in an extacy of passion; and covering his
 “face with his hands, remained motionless
 “and silent. Sophia took this opportunity
 “to retire. My wife remained with him.
 “He recovered, and looking wildly about
 “him — demanded where Sophy was.”

“Retired to her chamber, my lord.”

“And can't I see her? won't she smile
 “upon me? I shall go mad if she does
 “not. Oh! Mrs. Belton, throwing him-
 “self on his knees to my wife, and taking
 “her hand, have some pity on me.”

“Rise, my lord! rise, and compose
 “yourself. What can I do? what would
 “you have me do?”

“I know not, said he: I am distract-
 “ed.”

“He

“He said no more, but hurried out of
“the house. This was the last struggle
“his reason had with his passion; for, from
“that moment, he abandoned himself en-
“tirely to the latter. I was then in the
“country, transacting his business. And
“when I came home, my wife did not fail
“to acquaint me with this affair. I fore-
“saw the dreadful consequences that would
“attend this passion, which he, so unhap-
“pily for us, conceived for my daughter.”

“He came to our house as usual, and,
“considering the obligations I was under to
“him, as he still kept himself within
“bounds, I mentioned nothing to him of
“what my wife had told me. Sophy be-
“haved as before, in hopes that time and
“reflection would work a cure. But I was
“mistaken, and only fed the flame by suf-
“fering her to be seen by him so often as
“she was. One day he told me he wanted
“to speak to me alone, and took me with
“him in his chariot to a tavern. We dis-
“coursed about different things till after
“dinner; and when he had acquired a lit-
“tle courage from the wine, which he
“drank plentifully of, during his meal,
“he

"he at last disclosed his guilty passion to
 "me. I adore her, said he, and can-
 "not live without her. I will put my life
 "in your hands. Consent to my marrying
 "her privately, I will give you any secu-
 "rities in my power, that I will leave her
 "all the fortune I can when I die, in case
 "that should happen before my wife's de-
 "cease: and if she shall die first, your
 "daughter shall be my lawful wife."

"My blood grew cold at the proposal.
 "Oh, my lord, said I, let your reason
 "and your honour get the better of your
 "passion. What a dreadful thing do you
 "propose! and to whom? to a father that
 "doats on his child with an extravagant
 "fondness."

"Consider," said he, interrupting me,
 "that you will promote her fortune be-
 "yond your utmost wishes."

"But upon what terms, good my lord?
 "Her fame, her character will be blasted
 "for ever: she will be accounted your
 "mistress: I shall be held an infamous
 "pandar, who have sold the honour and
 "eternal

“eternal welfare of my daughter for gain :
“I shall be pointed at in the streets : and
“you will bring shame and disgrace on the
“heads of her unfortunate parents.”

“To repeat all our conversation is im-
“possible. He wept, raved, swore, en-
“treated, offered bribes, and made use of
“menaces : they were all equally unavail-
“ing. He only asked leave to visit her
“as usual. I told him it would be im-
“possible to see her after what had passed :
“that I was the child of his and his father’s
“bounty, who had made me what I was.
“That every thing I had in the world was
“at his command, except the honour of
“my wife and child, and my integrity.
“That I should always regard him as my
“patron and benefactor, and, as such
“should be truly rejoiced to see him at
“my house ; but hoped that he would not
“be displeased if I prevented his seeing
“my daughter, for the sight of her would
“only inflame his passion, and make him
“worse.”

“At your peril, Belton, said he, his
“eyes sparkling with rage, and his whole
“frame

“frame agitated by fury; at your peril
“remove her.”

“Her honour is dearer to me than my
“life: she must go where that can best be
“protected.

“I hastened from his presence home-
“ward; and, as we lived but at a small
“distance from London, I repeated the
“conversation to my wife, and begged her
“to send Sophia to a friend’s house, till
“this storm was blown over. She obeyed:
“and I waited, with impatience, till I
“knew what effect her absence would
“have upon him, and till I saw whether
“he would come near the house again.
“He returned the next morning. He
“came to me with a dejected countenance.
“Well, Belton, said he, have you
“been cruel enough to remove the object
“of all my wishes from my sight?”

“I have done, my Lord, as a father
“ought to do, who regards his child.”

“Then, said he, starting up, per-
“dition seize me, villain, but thou shalt
“pay for this insult!”

“I found

“I found remonstrance would be vain,
“and therefore braved the storm. Before
“she went, my Lord, she desired these
“toys, with which you would have pur-
“chased her honour and her happiness, to
“be delivered you.”

“It is false, it is hellish false. You
“forced them from her: and thus I will
“destroy them, as I will thee; but she
“has worn them, and they have acquired
“a value by that: they have to me, at
“least, and I will keep them for her sake
“for ever.”

“He gazed on them for a few moments.
“As for you, Sir, said he, you must
“resign your employment: there is another
“ready to take possession of it.”

“It is well, my Lord; I wish he may
“be as faithful to you as I have been.”

“He made no answer, but went away.”

“I immediately sealed up the papers
“that concerned myself; left all his ac-
“counts, and every thing that related to
“his

“his affairs, in proper order, and departed
“for London to see my dear girl. I met
“her, and acquainted her with this change
“in my fortune. She wept bitterly, and
“accused herself of being the cause of it.
“The next day, my poor wife came to me,
“and informed me, that the person whom
“Lord Cotswold had put in my place,
“came to my house soon after I quitted it,
“and had seized all my goods for rent,
“and not left us any thing to call our own.
“This stroke affected me sensibly; for I
“saw my Lord was determined to destroy
“me, as he had threatened. It is true I
“owed him for many years rent; but he
“had made me a present of the house to
“live in, and I thought, he would not
“be so ungenerous. But I could not help
“myself, and began to cast about me to
“contrive how I should support myself and
“family: and going out that evening,
“when I was about ten or a dozen yards
“from my friend’s house, a man tapped me
“on the shoulder, “Is not your name Bel-
“ton, Sir?”

“It is, Sir: what is your business with
“me?”

N

“I have

“I have a writ against you, at the suit
“of the noble Lord Cotswold for two
“hundred pounds and the interest: you
“must go along with me.”

“I accordingly went to his house, and
“sent to my poor wife and daughter an
“account of my situation. It is too af-
“fecting for my spirits, almost exhausted,
“to recollect their distress, or my own
“feelings. Let it suffice to say, that I have
“been confined here near three years at his
“Lordship’s suit. In that time, my poor
“wife has sunk under the weight of her
“afflictions; and about a year ago she died.
“Happy for her that she was removed to a
“place of rest, ere we had experienced the
“most bitter and piercing wants. When
“his Lordship thought that distress had
“softened my pride, he sent one of his in-
“famous agents to me. I soon learned the
“purpose of his visit, and dismissed him in
“such a manner, that I believe he will
“hardly venture here again. We have tired
“out every friend we had in the world,
“by repeated applications for assistance;
“for the most friendly is wearied at last
“with relieving the distressed; and, but
“for

“for your generosity to my daughter, I
 “should have been, ere this time, number-
 “ed with the dead. How she came to
 “meet you, or for what purpose she left
 “me, I know not.”

“Ah, Sir,” said she, “don’t think of
 “it. I don’t desire to think of it myself,
 “though it procured me the happiness of
 “seeing this gentleman. Oh! could I sit
 “by you, and see you expire for want?”

“Be comforted, young lady,” replied
 Wills; “better days are yet in store for
 “you. Pray, Sir, where does Lord Cotf-
 “wold live?”

“In —— street ——.”

“Have you ever made any proposals to
 “him since your confinement?”

“Never. There is but one that he will
 “accept of, and that is the only one I ne-
 “ver will make.”

“But you don’t know, my good Sir,
 “how his heart may be softened. Perhaps

“his passion may have changed its object.
“Give me leave to go to him: I will not
“fail to see him in the morning, and you
“may get a release from him on your own
“terms.”

“Take care, Sir, what you say to his
“Lordship; for, should you propose any
“thing dishonourable, I will never abide
“by it.”

Wills assured him he would regard his honour as much as his own: and Belton consented that he should go to Lord Cotswold, and speak to him on his behalf.

When they had settled these matters; Sophy prepared tea for them; and Wills became inquisitive concerning the mode of living in the prison.

“There are many real objects of compassion confined here,” said Belton, “and
“some who are not: but however good or
“virtuous a man may be when he comes
“into such a place as this, yet, from his
“being obliged sometimes through necessity
“to keep company with the most iniquitous
“of

“of mankind, who frequently resort to these
 “places, he cannot entirely escape the con-
 “tagion. There are deeds of villany set in
 “motion in the most remote parts of the
 “town and country, by springs which are
 “concealed here: and a man, when once he
 “is reduced to want, and hidden in a horrid
 “prison, has no regard to fame, or a good
 “character: he imagines that he has nothing
 “worse to fear, and he thinks himself autho-
 “rized to prey upon those beings who have
 “been the cause of his misery. There are
 “some here so base as even to take advantage
 “of the distresses of their fellow prisoners.
 “In short, a prison is but a school for ro-
 “guery: and a man will put in practice tho-
 “se things when enforced by want and ne-
 “cessity, which he would have shuddered
 “at the very thoughts of, if he had been at
 “liberty, and had only a competency.”

“And what must that wretch feel, who
 “has affluence, and yet has been the occa-
 “sion of all your miseries? I won’t fatigue
 “you too much now, Mr. Belton; you may
 “depend upon seeing me to-morrow, and I
 “hope I shall be able to bring you such
 “tidings, as will please you, and make

“you forget those hours of misery and
“anguish you have passed.

“Ah, Mr. Wills,” said Belton, “you
“are very sanguine; but, I fear that you
“will be disagreeably repulsed.”

“I’ll venture it,” said he, and he took
his leave of them.

C H A P T E R XIX.

*A conversation with a great man, which
makes WILLS act more foolishly than
ever.*

WILLS’s thoughts were not unemployed
from the time he left Belton, till the
hour it was proper for him to wait on Lord
Cotswold. He was considering in what man-
ner he should address his lordship: whether
in the pathetic stile to move his pity, or in
a manner to convince his reason how un-
justly he had acted. He was totally unde-
termined: and he let necessity supply the
place of time and preparation, and to his
lordship’s house he went. The porter in-
form-

formed him his lordship was at home; and when he sent up his name, though unknown, he was admitted into his lordship's apartment, who fortunately happened to be alone. He received him very politely, and invited him to partake of the breakfast that was just brought up. Wills declined it: upon which his lordship asked what had occasioned the honour of that visit to him. "I come, my Lord, to solicit charity for a man, who, burdened with years and misfortunes, sinks under his troubles, and relies upon your lordship to relieve him."

"This is a strange application to me, Sir, from you, whom I have not the pleasure of knowing, and in favour of one whom I am totally ignorant of. It may be, Sir, that he does not deserve the exertion of my charity."

"I assure you, my Lord, he does, infinitely more than the mendicant who interrupts your passage in the street, with, perhaps, a feigned tale of distress: but I know this to be real."

“But pray, Sir, favour me with his name. Am I a stranger to him?”

“You are not by any means, my Lord. His name is Belton.”

“Belton,” said his lordship, starting at the name; “and what have you to say from him, Sir?”

“To say, my Lord, that the miseries he has undergone, are shocking to think on, and too affecting for humanity to relate. He lies confined in a horrid, loathsome jail, that would daunt Despair even to enter: his body consumed by sickness and want, deprived of every necessary of life: his lovely daughter too, who suffers with her wretched father, is no longer the object of desire; she is the child of woe and calamity; pale, emaciated, and lost to every comfort, she is carried away by the strong tide of trouble, which she cannot resist, to an early grave. Her mother, from the same cause, has trod that path already: therefore, my Lord, to move your breast to compassion, I address you in their behalf: if you have

“have conceived any pique against him,
 “were you to see him, your revenge would
 “be satisfied — Forgive him, and, by one
 “noble act of generosity, cancel the remem-
 “brance of those ills he has suffered from
 “you. It will also cause you to forget
 “them yourself, my Lord, which will be
 “productive of more happiness to you.”

“And pray, Sir, who are you, that
 “presume thus to lesson me?”

“One who, incited by the calls of hu-
 “manity alone, has interested himself in
 “his affairs, and who would do any thing
 “to assist and relieve him; and who wishes
 “to awaken the same sensations in your
 “lordship; for surely they are only dor-
 “mant; they cannot be destroyed, nor can
 “there be any heart so insensible, as not to
 “be moved at their distresses.”

“You mistake, Sir,” replied his lord-
 ship, grinning, and taking a pinch of snuff,
 “mine is, I assure you. Pray, to you
 “know that old rascal owes me two hun-
 “dred pounds besides the interest for five
 “years, and all the expences he has put

“me to? Now, Sir, would you have me
“make him a present of that sum? Be-
“sides, it was money lent out of my
“pocket.”

“Certainly, my Lord, I would: nor
“would I put two hundred pounds in
“competition with any fellow-creature’s
“life: and if he dies, what will become
“of his wretched daughter? Her life is
“wrapped in his.”

No, no, she won’t die: we shall have
“her among us then.”

“Why, my Lord, *she* would have paid
“this debt once.”

“She would so, but not now: I fancy
“she intends to offer herself to me to try,
“but you may tell her it will not do.”

“What! do you imagine I came as a
“pandar, or a procurer for your infamous
“pleasures, my Lord; or do I look like
“a man who would bargain with you for
“the sale of that unfortunate girl’s inno-
“cence?”

“I do

“I do not know what you look like,
“friend; but I know the business you came
“about, looks very like what we call pimp-
“ing: however, if the girl will consent
“willingly and freely, I do not know what
“I may be tempted to do. I assure you,
“Sophy was a very charming, plump little
“tit once, a nice bit.”

“Your lordship’s insolence, which you
“may term raillery, is what I have never
“been accustomed to; and did you not
“owe your safety to your house, it is not
“your rank that should protect you from
“my resentment.”

“Oh, then, you are her bully too, I
“find: I did not think that she had been
“so bad as that.”

“I’ll tell you, my Lord,” said Wills,
rising, “I am an English gentleman, as
“well entitled to good manners and civi-
“lity as your lordship; and from what I
“know of your character, infinitely more
“tenacious of my honour, and am more
“afraid of doing what’s base and unjust
“than you are; who, I am sorry to say it,
“are

“are accustomed and inured to it. Another
“other circumstance, my Lord; I shall
“neither forgive or forget these strokes of
“wit, and shall have an opportunity of
“retorting them in a manner you will not
“like, and in a place that you would not
“chuse to hear them again.”

He went away without taking any other leave of his lordship; who was not sorry at his departure, as it relieved him from a very disagreeable visitor, who had told him, with a freedom he did not like, things he did not chuse to hear.

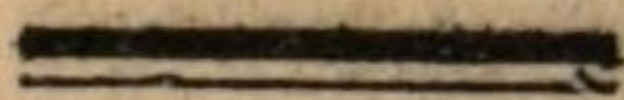
Wills, who did not really expect such treatment, was very much chagrined; especially when he considered, that he must go back to the prison with an account of this interview with Lord Cotswold. To relate every disagreeable thing that had been said to him, would have been shocking; and how to conceal them he knew not, as it would be wrong not to acquaint them with the reception he had met. — He was at the gate of the prison before he had come to any resolution: however, as they were anxious, as he imagined, to learn the result of
of

of the conference, he went in. He found them impatient for his coming: hope had not quite forsaken them; or, at least, had returned, since Wills's visit. They were both much refreshed, and altered for the better, since the preceding day: but the concern that was visible in Wills's face, caused an alteration in theirs. After satisfying his enquiries concerning their health, Belton could not refrain from asking him, how he had succeeded with Lord Cotswold, or whether he had seen him: "though I should imagine, from your looks, that you had seen him, and had a very bad reception."

"You are but too true a prophet," replied Wills. "I have seen him, and he is inexorable."

"Ah," said Belton, "I feared it. His heart knows no pity. I must suffer with patience. I have learned to do so, but 'tis a very hard lesson, Mr. Wills. Pray, Sir, if you will indulge an old man's curiosity, what did he say to you?"

Wills related their discourse partially, for he concealed the most shocking parts of it.



it. Belton remained silent when he had finished: and Sophia sat dissolved in tears. "Oh heaven!" said she, "that my father's liberty can only be purchased by my ruin!"

"Rather by my death," replied the father: "that will soon happen now, and heaven will regard thy virtue and goodness."

Wills endeavoured to inspire them with hope, and drive these melancholy notions out of their heads: he consoled and comforted them, and assured them better days were in store.

Hope though it be a flatterer, is very agreeable to the wretched; it often deceives them, but they trust it still. This was the case with poor Belton and his daughter: and though they had no certain reason, nor any probability of supposing their circumstances would be better, yet they could not help thinking they would, because Wills said so. There is not so pleasing a companion in the world as he, who indulges us in talking of what we wish and
like

like to hear. Wills, who desired to make the change that was to happen to them, and which he had resolved upon in his own breast, less sudden and alarming than it would otherwise appear, continually talked of Belton's getting his liberty. This, though an impossibility to them, was very pleasing; and they pressed Wills to stay and partake of their little meal, which Sophy had prepared. He consented willingly; and ate with an appetite that shewed them he was very well pleased with his dinner. He took his leave in the afternoon. "Well, Sir," said Belton, "I hope you will come and see us again. Though this is a terrible place to come to, yet you won't think so much of it by and by, when you are a little used to it."

"I don't expect to see you long here."

Wills, when he left them, went into the first coffee-house he met, and calling for a news-paper, soon saw an account of a number of people who informed the public they had money to lend on the shortest notice, and on the easiest terms. He took down three or four of their names, and repaired-

paired to one of their offices. His security was unquestionable: but he thought the terms very hard. He went to others, and found them nearly in the same story. — “These rogues,” said he, “are necessary to supply the wants of the distressed; but they live upon the misfortunes and calamities that befall others. Yet it is to these I must have recourse.” He accordingly happened, very unfortunately for him, to employ a man whose appearance of candour, and professions of honesty, were very great, though his terms were not in the least easier than any of the others. He wanted four hundred pounds. His estate was unincumbered; and in a few days the money was procured for him: but what with brokerage, premium, and other expences, he received little more than three hundred and forty.

Possessed of this sum, he hastened to the attorney who had Belton’s note. He saw him, and demanded if he was not Lord Cotswold’s attorney in that suit. He replied — He was.

“Have you got Mr. Belton’s note?”

“Yes.”

“Yes.”

“Then I am come here to pay you
“the money; and must have a discharge
“from you, to clear him from prison.”

“Do you know,” said the worthy son
of the law, staring at him, “that it is
“two hundred pounds, and five years in-
“terest, that makes it two hundred and
“fifty: and the costs are, at least, twen-
“ty pounds more?”

“Make out your bill, Sir, and you
“shall be paid.”

“Pray, Sir, are you any relation of
“Mr. Belton’s?”

“No, Sir: but what business is that of
“yours?”

“Why true, Sir, to be sure; but my
“Lord would like to know who it was that
“paid the note: for he said that Mr. Bel-
“ton had no friends or relations; and was
“taken by his father out of charity, and,
“that he must starve in prison.”

O

“That

“That was very humane in his Lordship,
“truly: but I shall not give him the satisf-
“faction to inform him who it was. How-
“ever, Mr. Belton knows nothing of this
“transaction.”

“No indeed! that’s something astonish-
“ing. Perhaps his daughter —”

“Hark you, Sir, be extremely cautious
“what you say of that young lady: and
“once more proceed, and finish your writ-
“ing out the demand, for I shall tender
“you the principal, interest, and costs;
“and if you refuse it —”

“No, no, Sir, I don’t intend it.”

“But my Lord must give a receipt in
“full to Mr. Belton.”

“There’s no occasion.”

“But he will have it; and you shall
“give me an accountable receipt for this
“money, and also promise me a receipt,
“and such a one as I desire.”

“Well,

“Well, Sir, you shall have it.”

When Wills had got the discharge in his pocket, he hastened to the scene of distress. He had, however, prepared them for his visit, by sending them a note in the morning, informing them that he should expect their company at dinner in a certain tavern he named. This was inexplicable to them: they were sure there was something extraordinary meant by it, for Wills was not accustomed to deceive them; but what that was they knew not. Wills, when he entered, gave the discharge to the goaler, paid his fees, and hurried to the room where they were waiting his approach, “Well, Mr. Belton,” said he, “did you receive my note?”

“I did Sir; but I know not what to make of it.”

“It is nothing but truth;” said he. “I have procured your liberty for this day. I have interest enough for that. Come, there is a coach waiting at the door for you: we will go and eat a comfortable bit of dinner.”

"I can hardly believe this to be real," said Belton; "but I am sure you would not impose on me: therefore I will go along with you willingly."

Sophy followed him in silence: and when she saw her father on the outside of the gate, where she never expected to see him alive, the tear of joy trickled down her cheek. Wills handed them into a coach, and directed the driver to proceed to the place he intended to dine at, which was a little way out of town. They kept a profound silence, the consequence of astonishment on one part, till the old man cried out, "that he could not trust his senses; and that there was some mystery in this, which could not be unravelled without Mr. Wills's assistance." He assured him, he would not explain it till after dinner, and then they should know every thing. "I shall be exceedingly impatient till that time comes," said Belton.

After dinner was over, he took an opportunity of introducing the note, and convinced Belton that he was really at liberty. The joy of the father and daughter are not
to

to be conceived. Wills was loaded with thanks and careffes by the old man. Sophia's tears and filence spoke the fenfibility of her heart. Not but ſhe would, had not her ſex's modeſty forbid it, have careſſed Wills as much as her father did; for ſhe could not help feeling ſome tender emotions in his favour, who had rendered them ſo ſignal a ſervice. And if ever Wills looked handſome, it was at that moment, when, like heaven's miniſtering angel, he was reſtoring peace to the afflicted, health to the diſeaſed, and liberty to the priſoner. He would not reſreſs thoſe acknowledgements which they were pouring forth; it would have been affectation. But he could not ſuffer them to indulge them too long, and therefore turned the diſcourſe into another channel, and the day was ſpent in happineſs and joy. When evening approached, he conducted them to a houſe where he had procured convenient and ſmall lodgings. He promiſed to viſit them next day, and left them to their repoſe, aſtoniſhed at the great change that had happened to them, and at a loſs how to account for it. The next morning he came according to his promiſe, and brought with him Lord Cotſwold's acquittance.

tance. Sophia's heart dilated with joy when she saw him. And he could not help thinking her a most amiable girl; but she did not affect his heart. Belton, who regarded him as a son, recovered his health surprisingly, and entered into a consultation with him, in what manner he should contrive to support himself and his daughter: many schemes were proposed, but they were not feasible. Wills had paid for their lodgings for a month. Belton had time to turn himself about. He proposed writing to a distant relation of his, who had been left a considerable fortune in a distant county of England, and offering himself in the capacity of overseer of her estate. That was approved of, and Wills dropped a letter as he went out, enclosing notes for thirty pounds, to support them till they should have an answer from the country; and having restored them to liberty, he returned home very well satisfied. However, not before he had enjoined them, in the strongest manner, not to say a syllable of the transaction to any body.

The END of the FIRST VOLUME.

Goldsmith, Oliver, 1728-1774

The triumph of benevolence, or the history of Francis Will

Bd.: 2

Berlin 1786

Res/P.o.angl. 142 m-2

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10923475-1

VD18 12739766-001